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Integration:  
a smooth  
start 7



Speech therapy –  
dead in 5 years? 5

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## “Charter of Liberation” for disabled people

A Labour government would introduce anti-discrimination legislation for disabled people, a national disability income, a £5 a week winter premium to help those on supplementary benefit with their fuel costs, and financial help with moving out of institutional care.

It would also implement the Disabled Persons Act, extend invalid care allowance, improve the disablement resettlement service and enforce the 3 per cent quota for the employment of people registered disabled.

These commitments are part of a comprehensive Charter for Community Care launched last month by Michael Meacher, shadow social services secretary.

“This is a charter of liberation for the elderly, the disabled and their carers”, he said. “This is a systematic build-up of community care. It has never been done before and is urgently needed.”

Labour's plan depends on establishing a new partnership between the providers and users of services and spending more money on buildings and services like community nurses or home helps. Michael Meacher promised 100,000 new jobs within 2 years. Firms making disability aids are also in line for investment.

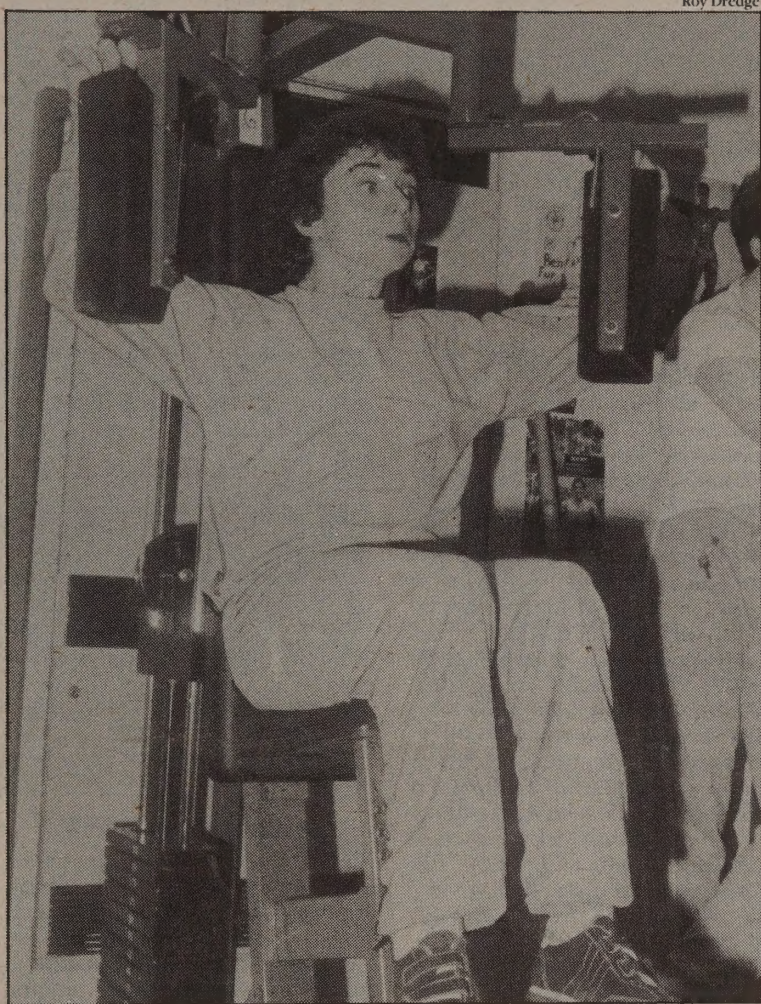
Joint working parties would be set up to produce local guides to community care and a code of practice for professionals.

Community based assessment teams, including occupational and speech therapists, would agree individual care plans with elderly and disabled people, to be reviewed regularly.

The needs of carers “are central to Labour's package for community support,” says the charter. Besides getting support from the assessment teams, carers could have a carers' liaison officer in every health authority to oversee services for them.

The cost of the plan, £600 million, would be found by gradually transferring money paid out in supplementary benefit for board and lodging to local authorities, and from Labour's job creation programme.

The Spastics Society welcomed the commitment to a partnership between providers and users of services. “A plurality of approach is essential if we are to have real consumer choice,” said John Cox, the director.



Roy Dredge

*Benevolent torture . . . Sue Smith exercises on weight training equipment at the Meadowbank District Sports Centre in Durham. More pictures, keep fit ideas and unusual sports on pages 8-10.*

## Act still awaits action

Pressure is mounting on John Major, Minister for the Disabled, to make a decision about implementing the Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act. It became law 9 months ago.

The Prime Minister and Mr Major faced angry criticism in the Commons on 10 February from the Labour leader Neil Kinnock, Jack Ashley, chairman of the All Party Disablement Group, and Tom Clarke, sponsor of the original Bill (see *Month in Parliament*, page 4).

Then on 25 February the local authorities, who will be responsible for implementing the Act, pressed the Minister for a decision. Representatives of the Association of County Councils and the Association of Metropolitan Authorities offered to put some of the clauses into effect by 1 April if the Government would ensure that the Rate Support Grant for 1988-89 took account of the extra cost – at least £8m.

The clauses cover the duty of local authorities to assess the needs of disabled people for services under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act and at the same time to consider a carer's ability to continue caring; to inform anyone receiving social

services of the full range of services available to them; and to consult disabled people's organisations when people with knowledge of disability are being appointed to public bodies.

The Minister agreed to put his decision in writing soon.

“It is clear that implementation will be slower than we could wish”, commented the associations.

On the clauses dealing with setting up procedures for assessing disabled school leavers and providing appropriate services for them, the Minister has asked the AMA and the ACC to produce a firmer estimate of cost and a timetable for action by May. No timetable has been mentioned for other clauses.

(See also page 16)

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## Motability out of reach

A new report on the Motability scheme calls for better guidance to users on which vehicle to choose and more money to help them buy the right size vehicle and appropriate adaptations.

The report reveals that of 386 people receiving mobility allowance in the spring of 1985 – people eligible to obtain a car or wheelchair through Motability – 9 out of 10 were unemployed and 6 out of 10 lived in households where no one was earning.

“The response to various questions asked of users, non-users and ex-users of Motability schemes indicate that for many low-income households the allowance is too small for them to enter the scheme or to enter it in a satisfactory way,” says Professor Hoinville of the City University, London, author of the report.

“There is a strong, recurring emphasis in the survey responses to financial problems, finding the deposit, meeting running costs, and so on. Often people try to get around the problems by buying cheaper, older cars or vehicles which are too small or inadequate for their needs.”

While almost all users were satisfied with the scheme itself

and two-thirds were very happy with their car, there were complaints about vehicles which were too small for a disabled person's needs, adaptations which were unsuitable, difficult to obtain and costly, and inconvenient servicing arrangements by dealers.

Commenting on the report, Lord Goodman, chairman of Motability, said that Motability was not sufficiently known to many people who might benefit from it and users might need more counselling on how to make the best of it.

“The report demonstrates the need for further funds to provide an additional counselling service,” he said, “and above all further funds to supplement the service for those disabled people who need additional resources to adapt their car to their own individual requirements.”

The report covered who uses Motability, how satisfied users were, why agreements were terminated early and the Motability literature. It was sponsored by the Nuffield Trust and the DHSS.

The Response to Motability, available from Motability, 4 Carlton Gardens, London SW1, £5.

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# Letters to the Editor

Disability Now 12 Park Crescent London W1N 4EQ

## Distorted criticism of the Carnegie Council

I read with interest your fair and balanced report on the cancellation of the Artability Conference (DN, August), and also the letter from Mr Lumb of the Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People (DN, November). Not only does he attack the Carnegie Council again but also criticises Chris Davies of The Spastics Society and me personally.

His criticism of Chris Davies is unfair as he uses selective quotes to try to prove his point. Chris Davies gave valuable help and critical comment to the planning of the Conference. He was constructive and not destructive in his approach.

The Carnegie Council decided not to engage in public argument after it had attempted unsuccessfully to seek the co-operation of the Coalition. I wish, however, to make only two points to show the sham of Mr Lumb's remarks.

He has clearly forgotten that the Coalition had to apologise in its Journal in retracting an earlier accusation that our Council had not consulted with GMCDP. He now states that subsequent letters were sent to the wrong address at the City Council.

It seems strange that we have a letter of apology from the chief executive of the City Council explaining the reasons why the Disabled People's Unit had not responded to 3 letters and telephone requests for nomination of the member to the Conference planning group.

Stranger still, is the fact that the GMCDP, through the Equal Opportunities Committee, had issued a motion condemning our Council and Conference during the period the Carnegie Council was discussing the event with GMCDP.

The second factor concerns telephone discussions.

In a telephone conversation at one stage I did make the obvious point that the cancellation of the Conference would negate the opportunity for the 300 delegates to pressurise the Government for the £1m fund for adaptations to arts premises, which we have requested and still believe to be vital. To translate this into "millions of pounds of Government grant-aid" is gross distortion.

If Mr Lumb cannot produce evidence to justify his criticism he should refrain.

The Carnegie Council hopes the Manchester Coalition might, in future, be prepared to assist not only their few members, but the majority of ill, housebound and disabled people whom they do not represent, to participate in and enjoy the arts. That is the only aim of the Carnegie Council.

**Geoffrey Lord**  
Secretary  
Carnegie Council  
Regent's College  
Inner Circle  
Regent's Park  
London NW1

## After 19 - what? Information needed

Constantly we hear and face the question, "After 19, what then?"

I would be pleased to receive comments from groups or individuals as to what facilities - apart from those offered by The Spastics Society - exist in their particular area.

I wonder if they are satisfied with the existing provision and, if not, what they would like to see. Any comments would be very helpful.

It seems to me that there is a need to assess this provision and re-affirm the need for it. Only by bringing pressure to bear on the DHSS and local authorities can we begin to address the problems.

All replies will, of course, be



Happy housekeeper David Hewitt is one of 4 severely disabled "after 19s" who now live in the community. Their bungalow is part of The Spastics Society's Tiptree Project.

treated in strictest confidence.

**Betty Fisher**  
227 High Street  
Dunsville  
Doncaster DN7 7BU  
*Acorn (Accommodation, Care, Occupation, Reception, Needs for the 19 Plus) is a new charity founded by parents of multiply disabled children in Kent. It aims to provide accommodation and day occupation in the community for young adults after they leave residential school. The charity, which is affiliated to The Spastics Society, is appealing for £300,000 to adapt or build a bungalow for 5 disabled people and a sleep-in member of staff. So far they've raised £7,000. Contact Mrs Dierdre Ryder, Secretary, Acorn, 56 Northwood Drive, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4QS, Tel: (0795) 25521 - Editor.*

such a service. This information was to be fed through to regional managers and social workers. Unfortunately, the response was very poor.

If we are to respond to cries for help from Mrs Matthews and others, we must have this information. So please, the Society does care. We do want to help, but we need facts to work on.

If, like Mrs Matthews, you have struggled on unaided, write and let us know.

**Ann Hithersay**  
Director of Regions  
The Spastics Society

## ...and so do we

I was saddened to read the letter from Mrs Matthews of the Sandwell and District Spastics Society concerning the problems of ageing parents with severely multiply handicapped adults still living at home with them. Sad because, despite her contacts with the organisation and after the sterling work she and her husband have done for The Spastics Society, particularly at our Kyrre Park unit, she feels that the Society does not care about these problems.

We do care, and the problems faced by ageing parents are constantly being tackled and resolved on an individual basis by the Social Services Division.

Unfortunately, our response and ability to plan is hampered by our lack of "real" information about the need for services.

The Social Services Division has recently integrated its field and residential services within 4 geographical areas, which will, I believe, give greater access to the Society's provision.

Also, knowing that parents do not want their son/daughter to have to be admitted to a residential home in the event of their death or incapacitation, this division has embarked on a new provision of community care. I believe this provision will eventually be more responsive to local needs and individual requirements.

Finally, I ask Mrs Matthews to talk directly with her Area Social Worker about any specific problems she may have at this time, in order that she can receive the help she needs.

**John Belcher**  
Director of Social Services  
The Spastics Society

## We do care, Mrs Matthews...

I was very sorry indeed to read Sheila Matthews' letter (DN February) highlighting the problem she shares with many ageing parents of severely and multiply handicapped young adults all over the country.

The Spastics Society's staff in the Midland Region were instrumental in lobbying for the special care unit for multiply disabled adults in Sandwell, where Mrs Matthews' son is cared for by day, and we have also been involved very recently in raising £3,000 for a special wheelchair for him. But we are very conscious that these efforts only provide a panacea and not a long term solution to the problem.

Appropriate locally-based respite care could help Mrs Matthews and her husband care for their son in the family home for a little longer.

However, we recognise that there is an urgent need for all young men and women who are multiply handicapped to take their own place in the community. Community care in ordinary houses as close as possible to family and friends is an ideal being pursued by the Society and a growing number of affiliated groups.

Group chairmen in the regions were recently asked to let regional chairmen know of people in their groups who needed



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(sic)

DN's diary column  
by Simon Crompton

## Beastly

Hundreds of elderly and disabled people should benefit from the EEC directive which makes butter and meat from the Community's produce mountains available to needy groups free of charge. But a list of the joints ready for distribution, which include "Pony Parts (Chuck and Thick Rib)" made some of us wonder if they would all be to the taste of a nation (so they say) of animal lovers. Our man at the Institute of Meat, however, has assured us that Pony is an archaic name for a specific rib cut of beef, and also explained in unnecessarily graphic detail the whereabouts and composition of Clod and Sticking, Striploin Lankedge, Shin and Shank - and something called Pork Fish.

## Ailing?

Is the Association of Community Health Councils for England and Wales aware that its abbreviation, ACHCEW, hardly inspires confidence? Nor, for that matter, does the *Daily Mail's* medical notebook written by John Illman.

## Grave

A consultation day for health authority staff on "Growing Old and Getting Deaf" last month was a surprisingly sprightly occasion considering it was organised, according to *Community Care's* listings column, by the Royal National Institute for the Dead. Chief Executive of the Royal National Institute for the Deaf, Mike Whitlam, was relieved to find that he was not confronted by a convention of undertakers, but would have probably been able to hold his own - he used to dig graves when he was a student.

## Politic

Though it was good to see sparks fly as the leader of the opposition took on the prime minister (and vice-versa) about the implementation of the Disabled Persons Act (see *Month in Parliament* page 4), it was a shame that neither of them set a shining example in their terminology. Both persisted in referring to people with disabilities as "the disabled", thus further accentuating the tendency to treat human beings as political footballs.

Contributions, please, to DN

## Nominations?

"Disability our Arts - our Culture, Live at the Watermans, April '87" will be the disability arts event of the year. Apart from featuring disability talent at the Waterman's Centre, Brentford, on 25 April, it will also be the occasion for launching the London Disability Arts Forum.

Nominations are needed from people willing to serve on the executive of the Forum. You can nominate yourself and as many people as you like. Deadline for nominations is 15 March. Booking forms and draft constitution from the address below.

**Sian Vasey**  
Artsline  
5 Crowndale Road,  
London NW1



# Tebbit's spinal injuries centre in danger

A £1.5 million rehabilitation centre for people with spinal injuries may never see the light of day because the hospital where it was to be built may be pulled down.

The centre, which aimed to involve able-bodied and disabled people in rehabilitation programmes, sporting and social events, was personally backed by Conservative party chairman Norman Tebbit, who raised £600,000 towards it.

It was to be attached to the spinal unit of the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital in Stanmore, Middlesex, where Mr Tebbit's wife, Margaret, was treated after the Brighton bombing of 1984.

But in November last year, ASPIRE (Association for Spinal Injury Research, Rehabilitation and Reintegration) who organised the appeal, was advised by the North East Thames Regional Health Authority not to put any

money into the scheme because it was considering moving the hospital's services to Enfield. Building, already delayed from last year, was due to start this month.

£1.3 million has already been raised, and all major donors have been informed of the crisis. "They've been wonderfully supportive," says Shannie Ross, honorary secretary of ASPIRE. "No money has been withdrawn yet."

"The news that the Region is considering moving orthopaedic services to Chase Farm Hospital in Enfield hit us like a bombshell," she says. "Their final decision, according to the Region's timetable, will be a year from now. Until then, we're on hold."

The centre and its architect, Andrew Walker, who is himself disabled, were featured in *Disability Now*, March 1985.



**Happy 25th Birthday!** Actress Jane Ascher cuts the cake she designed and decorated for the National Autistic Society's 25th anniversary, watched by two children from NAS schools. Autism is now recognised as a lifelong mental handicap which is marked by difficulty with social relationships and communication. But many families still have to fight ignorance and indifference to find out what is wrong with their child, and in this anniversary year the NAS is launching an Autism Awareness Campaign. An information leaflet and 4 reports on the handicap will be widely promoted.

# Routine screening could reduce spina bifida

Routine screening of pregnant women could significantly reduce the number of children born with spina bifida, new research suggests.

Tests for spina bifida, which can cause paralysis, are usually only carried out on mothers-to-be living in areas with a traditionally high incidence of the congenital condition. But Anthony Gatrell and Andrew Lovett from the University of Lancaster have found that in those areas where screening is not carried out, the incidence is now highest.

The decline in the number of cases in England and Wales, from more than 1,000 in 1971 to 600 in 1980 is attributed partly to screening women and acceptance of pregnancy termination.

The Lancaster team, who based their report on statistical analysis of data from 1983 to 1985, found that only half the health districts in England and Wales carried out routine screening.

The research also found a possible link between the incidence of spina bifida and areas with known hazardous chemical dumps. Though the team stresses that this is tentative, it does seem to support research from the United States and Australia, and will be the subject of a follow-up study.

# Balloons bonanza

Over 200,000 balloons will be released simultaneously all over Britain in September to mark the grand finale of The Spastics Society's National Week (12-20 September).



# Black children need black parents



**Black children need black parents** is the message from Parents for Children, which last month launched a campaign to find homes for black children with disabilities. Jonathan (above) aged 18 months, who has multiple disabilities, is one of three black children now seeking families. Another boy, Ausha, 8, is deaf and partially sighted, and 9-year-old Lisa is emotionally demanding. For more information tel: 01-485 7526.

# Do disabled consumers suffer?

The Office of Fair Trading, a government advisory body, is finding out about the sort of consumer problems people with disabilities face.

It has sent a letter and questionnaire to 30 organisations concerned with disability, asking about problems with footwear, food, household appliances, vehicles, building work, public utilities and many other goods and services.

The study follows an OFT occasional paper published in

December 1984, saying that more information was needed to see if potentially vulnerable groups of people suffered in the market place. The results of this survey may be the grounds for recommending changes to trades associations, or advising the Department of Trade and Industry to change regulations.

*Individuals or organisations who want to let OFT know about their consumer problems should contact Neville Marsh, Consumer Affairs Division, Office of Fair Trading, Field House, 15-25 Bream's Buildings, London EC4 1PR.*

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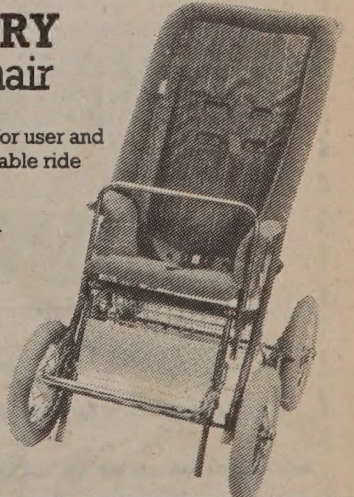
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## Board and lodging changes good for some, bad for others

The Social Security Minister, John Major, announced a number of selective changes to the board and lodging benefits last month.

There is an important increase for younger physically handicapped people, from £180 to £190 per week. With the Greater London Allowance of £17.50, this could mean a total allowance of £207.50 for some people.

The move followed what the Minister called "strong representations" from organisations concerned with residential care.

The other changes are: benefits for those in homes for elderly people will go up from £125 to £130 per week; the higher limit for very dependent elderly or blind people will go up from £140 to £145 per week; benefits for those in nursing homes for elderly people will go up from £170 to £175 per week.

However, MENCAP were "appalled" at the Minister's decision not to increase the limit for mentally handicapped adults, which stands at £150 per week. In making this decision Mr Major

had relied on an unrepresentative survey by management consultants of the costs for this group, they claimed. The action could herald the return of large institutions.

The Spastics Society has welcomed the move as going some way towards recognising the costs incurred by those in residential care.

But it is disappointed that the Minister did not allow people on the higher rate of attendance allowance to receive the nursing home rate of £230 per week without having to reside in a nursing home.

This point was supported by Dafydd Wigley, MP, in the debate on disabled people in the Commons on 17 February. Referring to the problems of local authorities supporting people in residential care, he said that "If the Government had acknowledged the special needs of that group of profoundly handicapped people, they would have encouraged local authorities to top up the difference".

Brian Lamb

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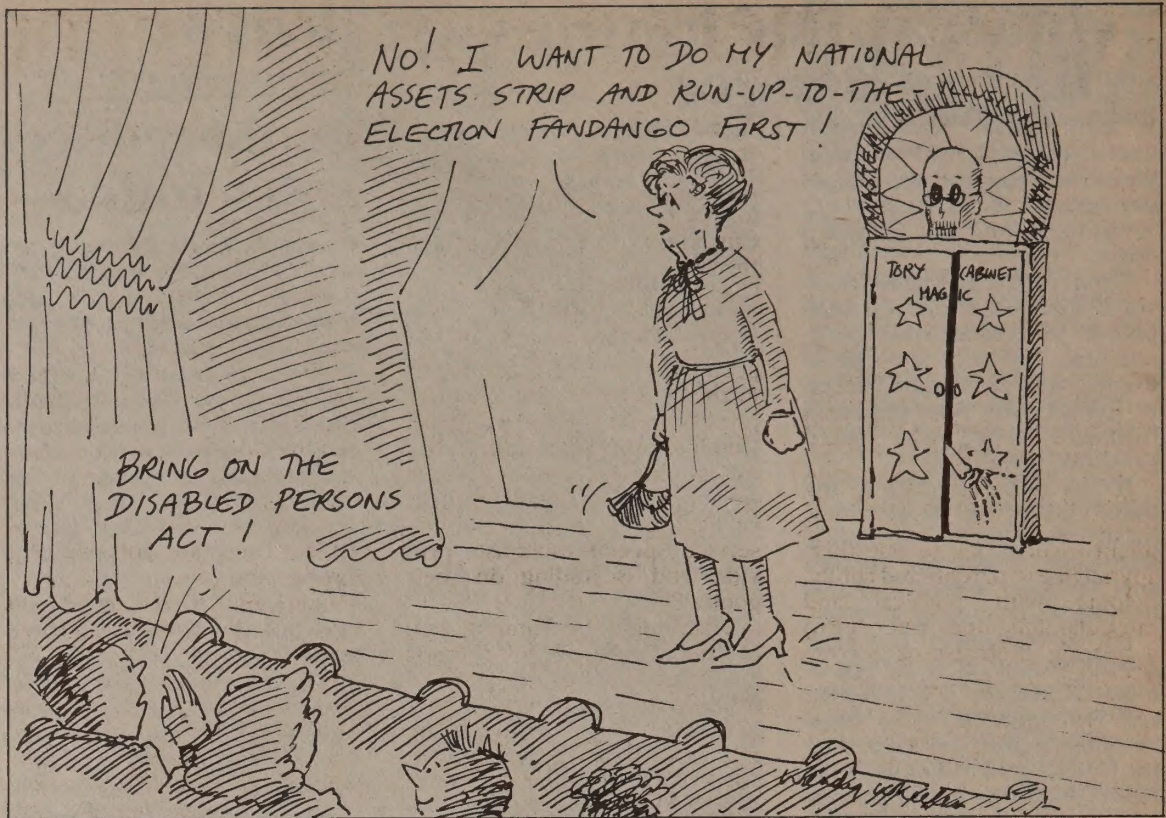
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## MONTH IN PARLIAMENT



### HOUSE OF COMMONS

## Needs of disabled people are being sacrificed to pre-election tax cuts, says Clarke

In a bitter exchange in the Commons on 10 February, Neil Kinnock, Leader of the Opposition, clashed with the Prime Minister over the failure of the Government to implement the Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation & Representation) Act.

This followed an accusation from Tom Clarke (Labour), author of the Act, that "the needs of disabled people and those who care for them are being sacrificed on the high altar of pre-election tax cuts".

Neil Kinnock asked where resources were going to be found to implement the Act when the Government had allocated no extra money in the rate support grant settlements paid to local councils. The Government was being "mean and evasive" with disabled people, he claimed.

Replying, Margaret Thatcher said the Government hoped to implement Section 4, 8, 9, and 10 of the Act by April. However, provisions in the Act which had significant resource implications could only be brought into effect as and when resources could be provided.

She said that spending on benefits for disabled people had risen by 75 per cent in real terms under her Government and she attacked Labour's own spending record on the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act.

The Opposition were so dissatisfied with Mrs Thatcher's answer that it sought a debate on 17 February on the needs of disabled people.

Jack Ashley (Labour) said the Prime Minister had misled the House of Commons.

The majority of disabled peo-

ple live on invalidity benefit, he pointed out. That benefit had increased by only 4.5 per cent from November 1978 to July 1986. In the same period net earnings for top tax payers had increased by 202 per cent. The number of people receiving invalidity benefit has risen by 40 per cent and the number receiving attendance allowance by 70 per cent, but these benefits were their legal entitlement and not the result of the generosity of the Government.

Defending the Prime Minister, John Major, Minister for Social Security and the Disabled, said that the Government has spent £750 million in increasing benefits - it was not just a wider take up.

Tom Clarke was still concerned that there was no firm commitment towards bringing in the Disabled Persons Act.

He said that voluntary organisations like Mencap and The Spastics Society were particularly concerned that Sections 5 and 6, dealing with young disabled people leaving special education, had no commencement date.

John Major announced that the Government was meeting local authority associations to discuss implementing Sections 5 and 6. But since the associations estimated that implementing these sections would cost between £30 million and £50 million, he was not prepared to commit himself to a date for commencement.

Jack Ashley added that the Government had sought credit for endorsing the Bill, but now refuses to provide the cash to implement it.

## Access to Information Bill limited by cost

The prospect of patients getting the right to see their non-computerised medical files has receded, after the Second Reading of the Access to Personal Files Bill on 20 February.

The Bill, introduced by Liberal MP Archy Kirkwood, would allow people to see their own medical, immigration, employment, credit, housing, education and social work records in written form.

However, Government doubts about the cost involved in granting access to large categories of personal files means that the Bill's sponsors will have to accept many restrictions at

Committee Stage for the measure to reach the Statute Book. It is therefore likely that the Bill will no longer cover immigration, employment or credit records.

The British Medical Association is also opposing the inclusion of medical records.

Archy Kirkwood asked the Government to keep an open mind. "The sponsors of the Bill will bend over backwards to meet... objections and accommodate genuine fears," he said. He added that the Minister should consider that no member had spoken against the Bill, and that all those who spoke had emphasised the importance of giving access to medical files.

Both the Government and sponsors of the Bill agree that records kept in school should be made accessible.

### HOUSE OF LORDS

## Orange badge abuse attacked

Lord Campbell of Croy called for improvements in the orange badge parking scheme for disabled people on 11 February. He was concerned that the scheme should operate in a more uniform way and not be open to abuses that could bring it into disrepute.

The mobility of the person involved should be the qualification criteria for the badge, he said. This should be determined in an independent medical test arranged by the issuing authority.

"Disablement of other kinds should not be a handicap to normal parking," he said. The length of time for which a badge is issued should be more flexible, he said: shorter periods than the normal 3 years and periods of up to 6 years should be considered. This would reduce the cost of administering the scheme.

There was general support from other Lords for the idea of making the eligibility criteria similar to those already being used for mobility allowance - namely, that a person should be unable or virtually unable to "walk". But there was little recognition of the controversy currently surrounding the mobility allowance definition.

After further consultation, the Government intends to put forward some modifications to the scheme which will be discussed by Parliament before regulations are changed.

Brian Lamb



# "Speech therapy is in danger of dying within 5 years"

## With a crucial appeal against a speech therapy ruling due this month, Simon Crompton finds out why speech therapists fear for the future

Speech therapists are still trying to shake off the misconception that they deal with cosmetic problems, correcting stammers, stutters and social embarrassment. Their role is more crucial than that. They offer communication-impaired children and adults the chance of a proper education, a job, an active and social part in society.

Dealing with stroke victims, people with head injuries and children with speech problems, speech therapists assess a condition and then try to devise the means to overcome it. This might involve one to one therapy, advice to parents and family, helping with physical and muscular difficulties, referring to a hearing therapist or recommending communication aids.

For those who receive speech therapy, the results can be spectacular. As the mother of a six-year-old child put it: "Thanks to the expertise and dedication of our speech therapists my daughter

was formerly bad. A graduate entrant can expect to earn £6,096 whilst the top of the profession, district speech therapists, earn around £13,000.

"Speech therapy is a graduate profession falling further and further behind non-graduate professions in terms of pay," says Dominick Wiseman, administrator of the College of Speech Therapists. "The Government isn't paying a fair wage for the service speech therapists provide, and is trading on their goodwill."

That might be running out. More and more speech therapy graduates are finding work in other, better paid, professions. According to Judith Waterman, chairman of the Association of Speech Therapy Managers, posts in traditionally popular areas like the South West and Cambridge

stroke victims and more children with severe handicaps are surviving. Diagnosis has also improved - there's a greater realisation that people can be remedied with speech therapy."

District speech therapist Dr Pam Enderby, from Frenchay Hospital in Bristol, is concerned that the Government is developing speech therapy policy on the basis of figures produced in the Quirk Report as long ago as 1972. "These are 300 per cent wrong," she says.

Quirk said that there should be 6 full-time speech therapists per 100,000 of the population, but 10 per 100,000 is now acknowledged as closer to the mark. And whereas Quirk estimated that there were 325,000 communication-impaired people in the United Kingdom, a report by Pam Enderby published in 1976 put that figure at 2.3 million.

"What concerns me is that these decisions are being made without any real knowledge of speech therapy and speech disability," says Pam Enderby. "At a meeting of decision makers within the NHS, I've actually heard someone say 'Well, speech therapy doesn't work anyway does it...'. That sort of thing is happening at medical committees and management committees."

Catherine Humphreys also has doubts about NHS priorities. "The health service still allocates resources to the most powerful area of the service - doctors," she says. "That seems to be the problem, that the health service is dominated by medical and surgical needs." Many of the problems with speech therapy arose in the late 70s, she believes, when assessment teams headed by doctors were developed very quickly, but there was no accompanying boost to treatment services.

Whether speech therapy is predominantly a medical discipline, or whether its educational component means it should be the responsibility of education authorities as well as health authorities, has been a long-running debate aggravated by the introduction of the 1981 Education Act.

## "I've had parents knocking on my door crying, begging for help" - Speech therapist

known it," says a district speech therapist.

"The profession is in danger of dying within 5 years," says Judith Waterman.

When Liberal MP David Alton tackled the Government on the potential crisis in speech therapy in Parliament in January, the junior health minister, Edwina Currie, stressed that speech therapy expenditure has increased nearly ninefold since 1974 - a much greater rate than the average NHS expenditure increase.

Moir Noble of AFASIC (the Association for All Speech-Impaired Children) has since written to Mrs Currie pointing out that if you start from nothing, any increase looks significant.

"Speech therapy never got enough resources in the first place," she says. "And the demands on the service have increased enormously - nowadays more elderly people, more

Last year the parents of a 5-year-old boy with severe speech difficulties took Oxford Education Authority to the High Court, arguing that the authority was legally obliged to provide the 5 days a week speech therapy he had been recommended in a statement of needs under the 1981 Act. The judges, however, ruled that provision should be a matter for the district health authority.

Since statements are binding only on education authorities, the ruling means, in effect, that no-one is obliged to provide speech therapy even if it has been specified in a statement.

The family is appealing against the decision at the end of this month, but its effects are already being felt.

Northamptonshire Education Authority has been advised that it has no legal power to finance a speech therapist who currently treats 9 children with special

needs, 7 of them in mainstream schools.

Speech therapists seem divided about the court decision. Kate Sorabji, District Speech Therapist for Paddington, says that speech therapy should remain the responsibility of just one authority. "Otherwise it would be very difficult to keep together such a small service," she says.

Dominick Wiseman from the College of Speech Therapists agrees. "Speech therapy is not remedial teaching... once you have speech therapists funded by two government departments, it's a recipe for chaos."

But Catherine Humphreys, a member of the education sub-

committee of AFASIC, is more pragmatic. "There is a group of us who feel that the only way forward is to get resources from whatever body is most appropriate - the body that recognises a particular problem," she says.

"It is beholden on our profession to ensure that that sort of court judgement should not increase the plight of children for the sake of expediency," she adds.

Few speech therapists would disagree with that.

And most would agree that unless there is a major change in funding or organisation soon, thousands of communication-impaired children will go on missing the help they need at an early age. That could affect not only their educational development, but the course of their lives.



Nick Oakes for Therapy Weekly

Five-year-old Christopher Hurry with speech therapist Sally Jones at the Globe Language Unit, Tower Hamlets.

ter was helped to develop from a sad, non-communicative introverted child to a happy, fluent and extremely chatty member of our family. Without their help this transformation could not have taken place."

But many children and adults are not so lucky. Some estimates say there could be as many as 3 million communication-impaired people in the country, but the number of speech therapists, most of whom are employed by the National Health Service, is less than 4,000. There are simply not enough speech therapists to go round and in some areas there are waiting lists for 3 or 4 years.

In the London district of Tower Hamlets, for example, 2,400 children have been assessed as needing speech therapy, but less than 200 are being treated. The rest must wait indefinitely. Last year the Tower Hamlets speech therapists became so stretched they had to close down the service in half the borough.

Since then district speech therapist Catherine Humphreys has had to face parents crying on her doorstep, begging for help for their children.

"It's absolutely tragic," she says. "Unless we get more resources from the NHS or local education authorities, the plight of these children is going to be appalling. We just haven't enough pairs of hands. In the last 6 months we have had 200 referrals for children with real needs. We've seen 3."

The shortfall in provision varies from district to district, but speech therapists' pay is uni-

\* Letter to David Alton, MP

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# How do you bridge the gap between design and manufacture?

Karen Wingate looks at the problems faced by inexperienced inventors

Have you ever come up with an idea for a piece of equipment to make your life, or the life of a disabled friend or relative easier? *Disability Now* regularly reports on awards given for innovative designs.

But how do the winners go about getting them manufactured, and how many succeed?

In 1986 James Holmes-Siedle won first prize in the Design and Industries Association's Melchett Award with a design for a plug-in hot water bottle which would eliminate the risk of scalding for blind, elderly or disabled people (*DN* October).

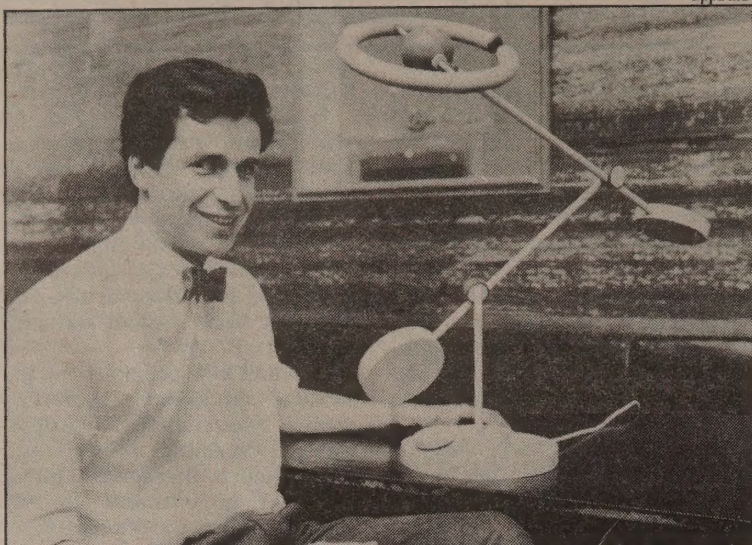
Since he won the award he has been struggling to get his hot water bottle into production and is now negotiating with 4 potential manufacturers. But to get this far has been a struggle.

"It's been very hard. They said in the competition brief that they would try and put you in touch with manufacturers, but they didn't in my case," he said.

The problems he came up against are those faced by all inexperienced inventors. The first is knowing who to turn to for advice. The DIA admitted they had been unable to help Mr Holmes-Siedle but had referred him to the Design Council's advisory service which provides information and can also help with patenting.

Another useful source of information is the Disabled Living Foundation. Ann Silvester, of the DLF says she sees a regular stream of visitors clutching home-made prototypes of disability aids, all anxious to know how to get them manufactured.

Where there is not a similar



Duncan Kerr with the reading lamp for visually disabled people which won him first prize in the Royal College of Art's Frye Memorial Award, a new design competition sponsored by Rotaflex/Concord. The lamp is not yet being manufactured but chairman of Rotaflex, Michael Frye, says there will be strong emphasis on manufacture possibilities in future years.

product already on the market, the DLF provides a list of possible manufacturers and design groups who could help.

"People think that because they come up with an idea that will help disabled people, manufacturers should be falling over themselves to make it," said Ann Silvester. "But that's not the case."

An award scheme which helps designers bridge the gap between idea and manufacture more easily is the Royal Society of Arts Medic Awards, open to medical design students. They must come up with a project of direct benefit to ill or disabled people and winners receive £5,000 in prize money to enable

them to spend 9 months developing their design with a manufacturer.

One man who knows from personal experience what it takes to succeed in the business is Steve Martin, managing director of Elfin Systems, which makes innovative electronic aids for disabled people. He went about things the hard way and set up his own company 4 years ago when he saw the outdated equipment used at the school attended by his son, who has cerebral palsy.

The company has grown steadily and now makes a variety of computer access systems, environmental controls and com-

munication devices.

Before setting up a business or approaching a manufacturer, the first thing to do is find out if there is a big enough market to make the product commercially viable, warned Steve Martin. "Solving the problem of one person is great, but if it can't be applied to hundreds of others, you can forget about manufacturing it," he said.

This is a major problem of designing for disabled people, said others in the business. The cost of development, materials, premises, advertising and a sales-force (with a profit margin for the manufacturer and royalties for the inventor), must all be weighed up against the potential profits from a limited market.

And because it is expensive to produce limited numbers of an item, the cost to the disabled customer is also high. "The hardest thing about producing aids for disabled people is finding buyers who can afford the product no matter how much they need it," said Steve Martin.

But according to Lord Snowdon, it is possible to produce well-designed equipment at a reasonable cost if you use ingenuity. He was closely involved with the design of the new Squirrel wheelchair, a motorised indoor-outdoor chair with 4-wheel drive, which can be folded into the boot of a car.

At £750 the Squirrel is half the price of the average powered chair on the market. Designer Jeremy Fry achieved this by starting from scratch and ignoring fancy electronics. The control box on most wheelchairs costs about £250. The Squirrel

has a device costing only £30.

Brian Boothby, who runs Europe's only "design for disability" course, at the London College of Furniture, thinks that another way to get around the problem of small markets and high costs is through workshops like DEMAND, which can be geared to produce limited numbers of products which would not be commercially attractive to large manufacturers. It makes individually-tailored items, but also takes good ideas and develops them for production.

**"Solving the problem of one person is great but if it can't be applied to hundreds of others you can forget about manufacturing it"**

Through experience DEMAND knows what manufacturers are looking for and tries to approach those which are tooled up to make a similar product, as setting up new tooling is costly. Last year 5 designs developed at DEMAND went into production.

But large manufacturers are beginning to take more interest in equipment for disabled people says Robert Sawyer of DEMAND. Developments in technology mean it is becoming cheaper to set up equipment for small runs, and modern information technology makes the crucial market research easier.

Britain is advanced in producing disability aids compared with other countries in Europe, Mr Sawyer pointed out, so there is also a large export market. "The climate is good now for innovation in the field of rehabilitation and disability," he said.

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The door opened slowly. An alert-looking woman gazed intently round the playroom. As I approached her to offer a welcome she looked down at the red-haired baby in her arms and said, "Well Tim, we've found it - it looks as though we're both going to belong here".

We later learned that Tim, Mary's first child, had both visual and hearing problems. Prior to his birth, Mary had spent many enjoyable sessions with other girls who were pregnant at the same time. His arrival, however, had caused such embarrassment and distress - he was the only baby to be handicapped - that Mary had immediately lost their companionship. She had a baby who was different; she didn't belong to their group any more.

Every afternoon parents bring their handicapped and able-bodied children to the opportunity group at Charnwood Nursery Centre in Stockport.

From a small playgroup founded in 1959, Charnwood has grown into an integrated nursery centre catering for 170 children, 50 of them with severe and multiple disabilities.

Anyone is welcome and from birth to 5 years.

Both children's and parents' attitudes to handicap - physical or mental - have been changed by attending the nursery. Parents are often in despair on hearing the first devastating news that their baby is handicapped; they feel terrified at a future clouded by the presence of such "a problem child". In looking for help they quickly learn to fear what they may find. They are now "different" people.

After 20 years practising the



Tackling the stairs.

integrated education of handicapped and able-bodied children from birth onwards, we have been able to prove and demonstrate to parents just how effectively children with very different handicaps can not only learn from their peers but teach them too.

One of the great obstacles to achieving this, however, comes from the medical model of handicap, from which all disabled children suffer. They are measured against some standard of the "perfect", pronounced a failure, put into a category according to their condition and identified by what they cannot do.

Understandably people are shocked when they see a child with no eyes or suffering terrible fits. Neither we nor the doctors should be ashamed that these things hurt deeply; they are part of being a responsible human. The crucial question is, "What do we do about it?". At Charnwood we try as Christians to accept the fact and look for the child's intrinsic value rather than



Fun in the sandpit for the children and a disabled helper while parents watch - or talk.

## Integration in nursery school

Grace Wyatt, founder of Charnwood, explains the ethos behind this pioneering centre

measure him against the ideals of health, wealth and achievement held by our society.

To prevent mothers of handicapped children becoming depressed and isolated, they and their children need help together in a normal and accepting environment. Each afternoon the opportunity group offers just this without making demands on the parents, who are free to take and use whatever support the group offers.

To see able-bodied and handicapped children playing together, to have a chance to chat with other mothers and to be given professional advice and support if requested, all these contribute to a happy and reassuring experience.

By the age of 3 most children are ready to join the morning sessions without their parents. There, in what appears to be an ordinary nursery school atmosphere, 50 children play and learn together. Of these, 12 or so children have "special needs".

Looking around the busy room, it is almost impossible to tell which children are handicapped. There is little abnormal behaviour and no "medical looking" equipment. If you can't walk, your beautiful blue car will make you many envious friends! All children must attempt to climb the carpeted stairs to the upper floor as well as play out in the specially designed and equipped garden.

There is never any shortage of help. Two full-time teachers and



Grace Wyatt and happy children.

2 who are part-time are supported by part-time therapists, a nursery nurse and numerous volunteers and students, including some who are disabled.

Parents make splendid volunteers. They also help to staff the toy-library in the evenings and at weekends, when 150 families with handicapped children make use of this facility. It has become the greatest attraction and service Charnwood has to offer. Even dads - so often absent from school activities - through the Saturday morning sessions to share their own successes and difficulties as well as to borrow toys for all the family.

Charnwood is a registered charity receiving an annual grant from the Stockport Local Educa-

tion Authority of £15,000. No charges are made for handicapped children and fees for the others are £2 a session.

At least £30,000 must be donated or raised each year to maintain the splendid custom-built centre and provide modest salaries for the small staff.

The concept of integrated education is still largely ignored or misunderstood in mainstream schools. Neither administrators nor teachers have grasped its significance.

Charnwood is sometimes accused of creating demanding and difficult parents when they insist on their child having a chance of attending a normal school.

These parents, however, have not only learnt how to handle their own child, sometimes even becoming effective therapists in the process, but have also become accustomed to the idea of

integration and have witnessed its benefits. They want this to continue for their child in the wider world; they know he needs to be accepted and educated in his own community.

Teachers who have never met handicapped children before are naturally alarmed at the prospect of having to work with an unknown quantity. If the Education Act of 1981 was properly implemented, this would never happen.

The preparation of a detailed "statement of needs" envisaged in the Act would give the teacher the necessary information about the child from both the parents' and professionals' points of view. It would identify the child's strengths and the goals for his educational progress. It would also detail the special needs of the child and the support the teacher would need to meet these.

This might initially mean a split placement between special school and normal school until special help could be offered in the normal school. Innovative organisation and goodwill together should be able to achieve this quite quickly.

The parents' cooperation and understanding would be essential; they, after all, know their child well.

For such long term success, however, it is crucial that their vital and early experiences should be of welcoming and support-integrated situations. This would gradually replace their self-doubts by confidence, particularly as they would see their child growing more aware of being like all other children.

As one put it, "He's not a different species - he's just a boy whose legs are a bit weak and wobbly!"

*Charnwood by Grace Wyatt is a paperback published by Lion Publishing this month. £2.50 from bookstores.*

*Charnwood is one of three case studies. Integration in practice 1, 2, 3, published by The Centre for Studies on Integration in Education, The Spastics Society, 1st floor, 840 Brighton Road, Purley CR2 2BH, £1.75.*



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Lawrence Coles



Michelle Alflatt, from Thomas Delarue School, throws the Boccia ball from the side of her hand.

## BOCCIA

**"It's exciting and easy to play for everyone"**

says Diane Wiscombe

Boccia is said to have been played at the Florentine court in the XVI Century. Now it is making a come-back as a game which people with many different disabilities can play.

Boccia is similar to boules. Each side throws 6 balls towards a target ball and those who come closest make the highest score.

Because the balls are quite small and light (26.5mm diameter, 275 grams) and slightly pliable (sand and lead shot encased in soft leather) they are

quite easy to grip and to throw, and so long as the player is in control of the ball at the moment of release any method of propulsion is allowed. Some people use a piece of guttering; others have a stand like a golf tee and hit it off the side of their wheelchairs; others might even kick the ball.

A boccia court must be smooth and level, eg a gym floor, measuring 12.5m by 6m, with 6 boxes marked out at one end where the players sit.

In individual boccia, the referee tosses a coin to establish the home player. The home player sits in box 3 with 6 red balls and the white target ball. The opponent is in box 4 with 6 blue balls.

The game starts when the referee holds up a red bat. The home player throws the target ball followed by a red ball. The

# Here's your sporting

Swimming, horse riding, field and track events have become common with disabilities. But how about boccia or water-skiing? And have you aerobics? *DN* asked people who have tried them to comment. On page 10 on clothes and equipment and we list organisations offering unusual

## WEIGHT TRAINING

**"I feel fitter and have a lot more energy"**

says Sue Smith

I am not aiming to be Miss Universe or to have muscles where you never thought muscles existed! Still, you may laugh at the thought of a 5ft, 7 stone 12lb woman with cerebral palsy doing weight training. I thought it was a joke too when a friend suggested it might be a way to increase my stamina and strength.

It all began when I was preparing for the Pyrenees expedition last spring. I knew that although I was fairly active I would not be

able to sustain any long walks. Time for exercise within my working day is very short, so I needed something which would not involve lengthy training sessions, changing, and so on.

I went along to my local sports centre, Meadowfield District Sports Centre in Durham, and discussed my needs with the female instructor there.

The static weight training equipment is ideal for people with cp who have problems of balance because you are forced to lie, sit or stand on the equipment rather than try to lift loose weights which may be difficult to hold.

The instructor said she had not worked with anyone who had cp, so for both of us it was a case of trial and error about which pieces of equipment I could use safely.

I found the equipment for building up leg and calf muscles fairly easy to use although I do need help getting on and off. I have also used equipment to strengthen stomach muscles and to build up arm and shoulder muscles, which has proved very successful as it has improved my grip for canoeing and driving my car.

The staff at the sports centre have been extremely helpful

with their advice and one person always accompanies me when I use the equipment because I need assistance.

There's no doubt that weight training has been a benefit to me. Although I am not always able to attend regularly, when I do 2 sessions a week I feel fitter and have a lot more energy. Ideally, I would like to combine weight training with swimming to improve my suppleness too.

The sports centre now runs a ladies' fitness class based on weight training and music and movement, but I can't make weekday mornings.

I think the advantage of weight training for someone with a disability is that you do not have to keep up with anyone else; you set the objectives for yourself.

I'm sure that staff in other sports centres would be willing to work with people with physical disabilities, so why don't you ask?

**PS** I wear a track suit and trainers. The track suit came from Cloth-kits, a mail order firm in Lewes with a shop in London, and the trainers which have a flap that fastens with velcro (instead of laces) are from the children's department of Curtess shoe stores.



Diane Wiscombe was captain of the England/Wales team at the C.P. World Championships 1986.

referee then holds up a blue bat and the opponent throws. The player whose ball is furthest away from the target ball throws next. The round is completed when all the balls have been thrown. There are 4 rounds to a game with each player taking it in turn to throw the target ball.

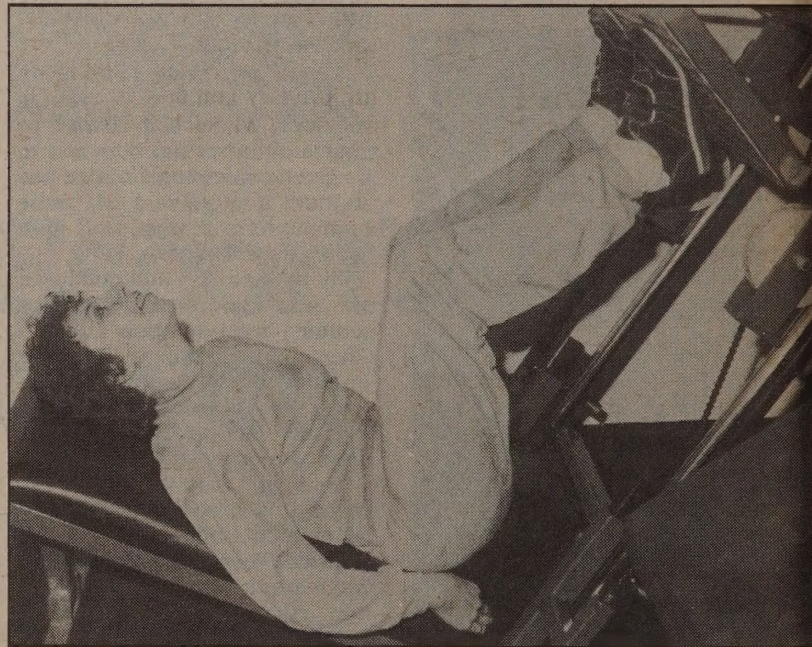
In team boccia, there are 3 members in each team. There may be men and women but one player must be Class 1 disability. Each player has 2 balls and the captain decides which member of the team should throw next. There are 6 rounds to a game.

I learnt to play boccia about 4 years ago at the National Star Centre, Cheltenham. It is my second sport, after swimming, but I love it dearly.

Boccia is exciting and easy to play for everyone, yet at the highest level it is better than snooker - the precision you have to have to get the ball close to the target - it's difficult to work out.

There are introductory days going on at the moment around the country and boccia will be included in the National C.P. Championships at Stoke Mandeville 22-23 August.

The next training day is 21-22 March in Birmingham and others are planned. Contact The Spastics Society's Leisure Services, address on page 10. Boccia sets are only available in this country from Newton Products (Beryl Mochrie, Sales Department), Meadow Works, Garretts Green Lane, Birmingham B33 0SQ, tel: 021-783 5081. £87.50, including a carrying bag.



Another way to build up leg muscles: Sue does 2 sets of 12 push-ups.



Playing informal Boccia at Thomas Delarue School in Kent: (from left) Smith, using his whole body to help throw the ball, Michelle Alflatt, Cbri and Stephen Nash.

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## WATER-SKIING

**"A wonderful feeling of speed"**  
*says Graham Hicks*

When Graham Hicks won a Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship to study services for deaf-blind people in North America last summer, he did not expect to take up a new sport at the same time.

Twenty-five year old Graham, who is deaf-blind, found that the most exciting part of his 8-week trip was that he learnt to water-ski during a break from his study at Deepcreek in Maryland, USA.

His instructor had never taught a deaf-blind person before, so it was a challenge for both of them.

To start with Graham held on to a beam at the side of the boat so that he could learn to balance and build up confidence before being towed behind. After only 1½ hours he was able to stand up on the skis for several minutes while he was being towed.

"To begin with I was a bit nervous, but it was really unnecessary," said Graham. "Water-skiing is ideal for deaf-blind people, because with other sports there is always the fear of falling or banging into something and hurting yourself. When you water-ski you are out in deep water, so there is nothing you can hit. Because you're not going



Graham Hicks (right) with his instructor at Deepcreek, Maryland, USA.

very fast it doesn't hurt when you fall in either."

He recalled with laughter his first attempts. "I must have looked very funny," he said. "I got the skis up behind my ears and the rope around my legs, but it's perfectly safe because the boat won't start to pull until you shout 'ready'."

Once he mastered the technique, Graham discovered the real joy of water-skiing.

"I had a wonderful feeling of speed as I moved through the water, which was very exciting," he said. "Unlike other sports,

such as tandeming, you're not controlled by another person but by the pull of the boat. You've got lots of flexibility and can move from side to side over the choppy wash."

He has not water-skied since he returned to Britain, but he is keen to introduce the sport to other deaf-blind people.

Graham Hicks is now a development officer at Sense, the National Deaf-Blind and Rubella Association, where he is in charge of transcribing all newsletters and correspondence into braille.

*The British Disabled Water Ski Association, formed in 1979, now has 150 members with disabilities. It organises beginners days and residential courses at its base, Tony Edge Centre, Heron Lake, Wraysbury, Middx, and around the country. The first World Championship for disabled water skiers will be held at Heron Lake 24-26 July. Membership is £12 a year. Contact the Secretary, Mrs M.D. Edge, 18 Greville Park Avenue, Ashstead, Surrey KT21 2QS, tel: (03722) 73046.*

## AEROBICS

**"People don't believe it"**  
*says Chris Taylor*

People don't believe it when I tell them I have run aerobics sessions for people with disabilities. But it's true.

My interest in aerobics and dance-style exercise began when I was studying drama with a dance option at teacher training college. Later, the combination of seeing a very pregnant woman joining in an aerobics class and a recurrence of my old knee problem made me realise that all exercises can be modified. I became convinced that exercise classes should be open to everyone. So when I was asked by The Spastics Society to run 2 sessions a day in Newcastle, I jumped at the chance.

It was a mixed group of ages and physical and mental disabili-

ties. At the first session, after an initial warm up of neck rolls, shoulder stretches, arm circling and spine stretches, I followed my primary aim and got everyone out of wheelchairs and away from sticks or frames.

For 40 minutes the members of the group, either balanced with the help of a volunteer or lying on mats, worked out, Jane Fonda style. Everyone managed most of the exercises and were helped to modify them where necessary.

In the second session, a smaller group concentrated on a series of physical exercises. The aim now was to encourage people to develop independent movement.

It appeared that many people in wheelchairs lack the opportunity to develop ways of propelling themselves. We managed to achieve shoulder rolls from wheelchairs and various ways of travelling across the floor. One person was thrilled at being able to do a shoulder stand despite severe curvature of the spine.



Early stages: out of wheelchairs and on to the floor.

The success of the participation day led to Keilder when a different group got together for an arts weekend.

About 20 people including volunteers joined in for an hour's workout to start the day. We had people in wheelchairs, people with balance and coordination difficulties and people with visual impairment.

Again we followed a Jane Fon-

da style work out, this time extended to jogging, jumping jacks, stomach crunches and situps.

Yes, for some it was very difficult. For one woman it was a triumph to raise her head, unaided, from the floor.

I emphasised the need to breathe properly and how to use breathing control in conjunction with the exercises.

I think it is perfectly feasible for anyone with a disability to undertake this type of exercise, working on the basis that you know how far you can go and observing certain basic conditions: no more than 10 disabled people with a good ratio of people able to help; large gym mats; good modern music with a strong rhythm; clothes that allow free and easy movement, preferably tracksuits or leotards.

If you are interested in this type of exercise, try contacting your local sports centre, gym or dance centre. I know, for example, that Dance City in Newcastle-upon-Tyne has facilities for wheelchair users.

Or you might like to start your own group. Your local Shape can put you in contact with tutors.

*Chris Taylor works with Northern Shape. The head office is at 1 Thorpe Close, London W10 5XL, tel: 01-960 9245.*

*Dance City, Peel Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, tel: (091) 261 0505.*

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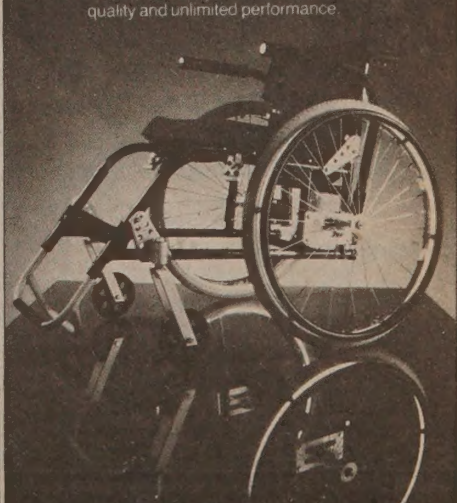
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# Geared up for sports and keep fit

Howard Bailey, Leisure Services Officer for The Spastics Society, offers advice

Disabled people should not be put off sport or keepfit because they are worried about finding the right clothes and equipment. Track suits, t-shirts, trainers, etc will be in your local sportswear shop or a store like C & A.

People using wheelchairs often need a tracksuit with a larger top than trousers. If you have difficulty buying them separately, you might be better off with a specialist supplier like Medipost.

It is easier to mix and match when you are buying in bulk. The Spastics Society uses the Adidas Shop in Edinburgh which offers a 15 per cent discount to clubs. We make sure that our tracksuits wash easily and find that dark colours are preferable.



Newton sports chair, address p8.

Adults or children needing specially designed swimwear or leotards will find CaSal Swimwear helpful.

There are many lightweight wheelchairs to choose from, though the specialist chairs tend to be very expensive. Newton Products has a light, fast, fixed chair with a folding back for £350 and will build to individual requirements.

The only place I know of where you can make some comparisons of lightweight and sports chairs is the physiotherapy department at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. Alternatively,

there are always some on show at NAIDEX; the next exhibition is 27-29 May in Manchester.

Aids for sports and keepfit are often just a matter of altering standard equipment to suit individual needs. Your local REMAP is geared to solving one-



Steve Roche, captain of the top para UK basketball team, the LGS jets, in his Gerald Simonds Quickie 1 chair, (which costs from £1,172). Gerald Simonds is sponsoring new kit for the 12-man team. Tel: (0296) 436557.

off problems, or the local sports centre or appropriate sports organisation may be able to help.

A limited list of sports and leisure aids can be found in the *Directory of Aids for Disabled and Elderly People*.



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The BEC Sportlite chair doubles for everyday use. Price £595 which includes many standard features. BEC Mobility Ltd, Fens Pool Avenue, Wallows Industrial Estate, Brierley Hill, W. Midlands, tel: (0384) 263191.

Medipost Ltd, Unit 1, St John's Estate, Elder Road, Lees, Oldham, OL4 3DE, tel: 061-678 0233.

Adidas Shop, 14 Castle Street, Edinburgh EH2 3AT, tel: 031-226 7252.

CaSal Swimwear, Parsonage Farmhouse, Barford Lane, Downton, Salisbury, Wilts SP5 3PZ, tel: 0725 21997

REMAP, 25 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8AB, tel: 01-637 5400.

## How to get yourself started

Kathy Johnson lists helpful organisations

The British Sports Association for the Disabled coordinates sport and physical recreation for all people with disabilities. It organises events from county to international level and offers advice to local groups who want to form sports clubs. BSAD, Hayward House, Barnard Crescent, Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 8PP. Tel: (0296) 27889.

The British Amputee Sports Association develops and coordinates amputee sport. It holds an annual games with competitions in track and field events, swimming, shooting, bowls, etc. Individual and group membership. Write to Dr G Thomas, Secretary, BASA, 110 Speed House, Barbican, London EC2.

The British Paraplegic Sports Society is the governing body of sport for people who are spinal cord paralysed. It organises the annual National and International Stoke Mandeville Games and runs the Ludwig Guttman Sports Centre for the Disabled. BPSS, Ludwig Guttman Sports Centre, Hayward House, Barnard Crescent, Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 8PP. Tel: (0296) 84848.

The British Deaf Sports Council organises sports on local, regional, national and international levels. BDSC, Mr R Haythornthwaite, 38 Victoria Place, Carlisle CA1 1UH. Tel: (0228) 20188.

The British Les Autres Sports Association, Mike Patterson, 30 Greaves Close, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 6RS. Tel: (0602) 260220.

The British Association of Sporting and Recreational Activities of the Blind, Ian Fell, 2 Westwood Road, Hillmorton, Rugby CV22 5QL. Tel: (0788) 65664.

The UK Sports Association for People with Mental Handicaps, Mark Southam, Hayward House, Barnard Crescent, Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 8PP. Tel: (0296) 436484.

The Spastics Society's Leisure Services Department initiates sporting and leisure events in England and Wales for people with cerebral palsy. It has 10 volunteer coordinators for different sports who are all athletes with disabilities and produces a bi-monthly newsletter, *CP Leisure News*. The department plans to publish occasional papers; the first, due in April, is *Physical Recreation for People with Multiple Disabilities*. Leisure Services Dept, The Spastics Society, Stephenson House, Brunel Centre, Bletchley MK2 2EW. Tel: (0908) 643277.

*Directory for Disabled People*, compiled by Ann Darnbrough and Derek Kinrade, Woodhead-Faulkner, £11.50. This comprehensive handbook has a chapter on sports and leisure which gives details of organisations offering activities from archery to wheelchair dancing, judo to sub-aqua sports. It also details useful publications, films and voluntary organisations, eg PHAB, RNIB and Mencap. Ask for a copy at your public library, or order it from any bookshop.

## Have you tried...

**Flying** Increasing numbers of flying clubs are happy to teach people with disabilities to fly. For example, Coventry airport in Baginston has good facilities for disabled people. For further information contact Dawn Marler, 28 Addenbroke Drive, Wylde Green, Sutton Coldfield, W Midlands B73 5PY.

**Flying Scholarships for Disabled People** in memory of Sir Douglas Bader are available from The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund. Contact The Administrator, Building 1108, Royal Air Force, Fairford, Gloucs GL7 4DL. Tel: (0285) 713300

**Fencing** The Wheelchair Fencing Association coordinates and helps develop the sport throughout Great Britain. Contact Leslie Veale, WFA, 14 Kingsley Park Grove, Sheffield S11 9HL. Tel: (0742) 362194

**Yoga** *Disability Now* April '86 carried a feature on the benefits of yoga for everyone. The Yoga for Health Foundation offers courses for people with disabilities, trains instructors in yoga for disabled people and operates clubs all over the country. Yoga for Health Foundation, Ickwell Bury, Northill, Biggleswade, Beds SG18 9EF. Tel: (076 727) 271.

**Canoeing, rock climbing** Churchtown Farm Field Studies

Centre, Lanlivery, Bodmin, Cornwall, tel: (0208) 872148, run by The Spastics Society, offers field study and adventure courses for people with disabilities.

**Wheelchair Tennis** is a new sport in this country, but growing fast with the encouragement of the British Wheelchair Tennis Association. Brian Locke, Director of Coaching, BWTA, 9 New Road, Weston Turville, Aylesbury, Bucks. Tel: (029 661) 3150 (evenings).

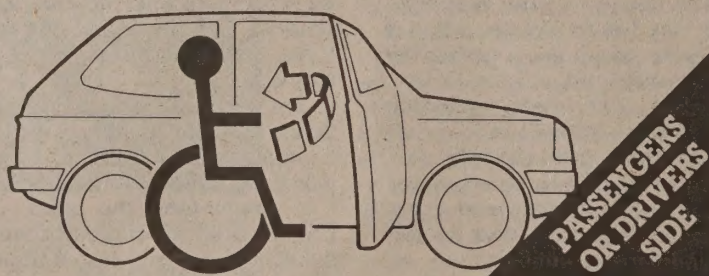
**Parascending.** A number of local clubs have facilities for people with disabilities and the British Association of Parascending Clubs will be able to put you in touch. BAPC, 18 Talbot Lane, Leicester LE1 4LR. Tel: (0533) 530318.

**Motorcycling.** The British Wheelchair Motorcycle Association organises racing events throughout the country and welcomes new members. They use ATVs (All Terrain Vehicles): 3-wheeled Hondas and 4-wheeled Suzukis. (Individuals and groups can also try out a modified 3-wheel ATV at The Thamesdown Trail Training Park in Swindon). Andrew Strong, Secretary, BWMA, 16 Tippetts Mead, Tawney Croft, Bracknell, Berks RG12 1FH. Tel: (0344) 59796.



All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) in action with para drivers Tony Heaton (Lancashire), Colin Jones (Cheshire) and Vince Ross (Liverpool).

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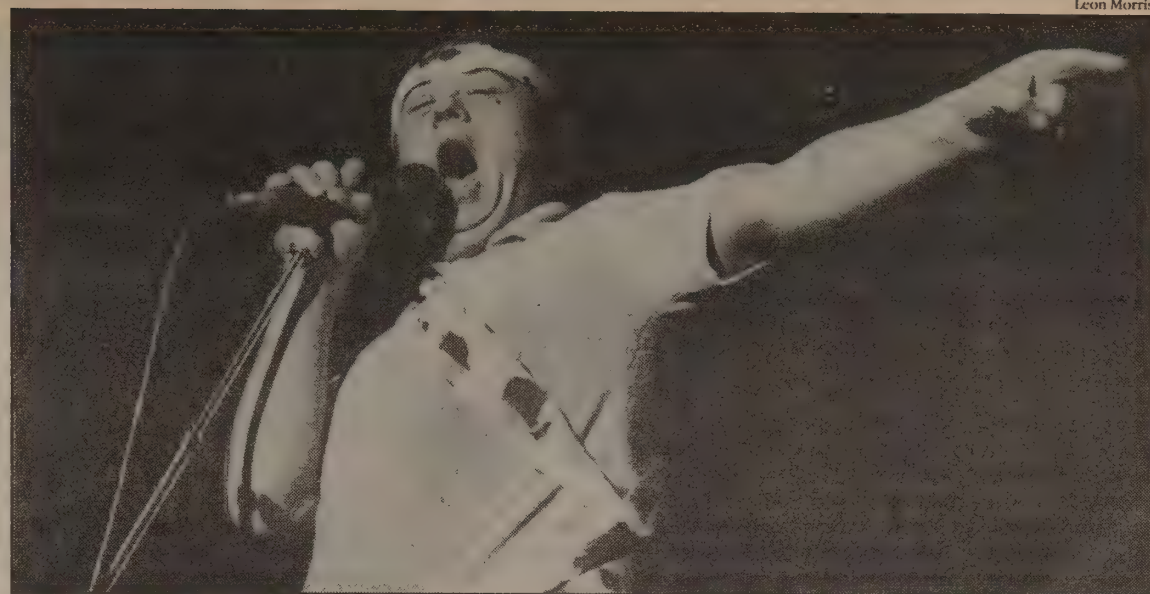
## OUTLOOK

## THEATRE

## The Rock 'n' Roll Dance

For one night, The Albany Empire, Deptford, was alive with the sounds of the Heart 'n' Soul company's first public performance of the musical *The Rock 'n' Roll Dance*. The company, a group of young people with mental disabilities from Lewisham, have been working on the musical since September 1986 and last night their hard-work, dedication and talent were much in evidence for all those people lucky enough to get a ticket for the show.

Through music and song we are told the tale of two rival gangs, The Scorpions and The Wildcats, who carry percussion instruments instead of weapons. There is a musical "rumble" - a veritable bloodbath of crotchets and quavers - at the end of which the two gang leaders, played by Geoffrey and Winston,



Geoffrey does the Rock 'n' Roll Dance.

realise that such rivalry is futile and decide to unite the two gangs in a concerted effort to find a singer.

Enter The Singer, played by Pino, whose rich and beautiful voice melts Donna's heart.

Donna is the sister of Geoffrey and he strongly objects to the blossoming romance between Donna and Pino. But then no self-respecting musical would be complete without its star-crossed lovers, and *The Rock 'n' Roll Dance* is no exception!

The highpoint of the evening

for me was when jealous Geoffrey, devastated by the thought of being left alone and never seeing his sister again, sings a powerful and moving solo, "In my heart and in my soul".

Needless to say, the ending is happy and the entire cast celebrated with a rousing and vibrant finale. Audience and company rocked and clapped together. It was like being at a party - I loved it - the perfect tonic for a miserable winter's night.

Edel Musselle

*Heart 'n' Soul will also perform at The Albany Empire during the week commencing 18 May. Mark Williams, co-ordinator of the project, hopes to tour The Rock 'n' Roll Dance later in the year. Contact Mark Williams at The Albany Empire, Douglas Way, London SE8 4AG. Tel: 01-691 3333.*

*The Albany Empire has facilities for disabled people and is fully accessible. There is an induction loop in the theatre for the hard of hearing.*



## The missing Link: campaign is launched against Granada TV

I am in a dilemma about *Link* (Sundays ITV). It is quite simply the best, most consistently positive programme on disability that television produces. But I don't think it is fair to review in any detail a programme which a large section of you cannot see.

The people who cannot see it live in the North West region. ITV output there is governed by Granada TV which still insists that its own programme, *This Is Your Right*, is more integrated than *Link*. So although *Link* has been broadcast in every other region since 1977, Granada has never shown it.

However, change may be on the way. The Oldham Disability Action Group, supported by the Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People, are campaigning against Granada's ruling. The action group thinks Granada is "patronising", presuming to know what is best for disabled people. I hope the campaign succeeds, but I'm pessimistic.

Dennis Potter was the subject of an extended *Arena* interview (BBC2, 30 January). He explored the underlying, recurring themes of his plays. His disability played a tiny part in the discussion. He wished he had chosen a different disability for *The Singing Detective* because people would not then have seen it as being autobiographical. But without his first hand knowledge of psoriasis the series would have been weakened.

*Encounter* (ITV, 8 February) looked at CRYPT, a charity which encourages creative activities among young people with disabilities. Overall it was interesting but strangely static. Exactly how CRYPT works was never properly explained.

*The Parent Programme* (BBC1, 9 February) showed the parents of young children with special needs sharing their experience so that we all benefit. A much more positive outlook than, for example *Antenna* (see DN January).

*QED: The Foolish Wise Ones* (BBC1, 11 February) highlighted three mentally handicapped people with rare talents. One man had a remarkably musical memory and was able to reproduce perfectly on the piano any music he heard. The second man had automatic recall of calendar dates. The third was a young boy with a gift as a draughtsman, who was able to produce excellent drawings from memory of sometimes very complex buildings he had seen.

Chris Davies

### Watch out for...

Contact (8 weekly programmes, C4, beginning 20 July at 6 pm, repeated the following weekend) is an arts magazine programme featuring people with disabilities.

*Sign a Story* (ITV, Monday to Friday, 27 to 31 July and 3 to 7 August) is for children. Tales are narrated, signed and appear as subtitles.

## MOTORING

## Mini marathon

Production of the Austin Rover Mini is to continue into the 1990s, it was announced last month.

This will be welcome news for many drivers who need special adaptations and would find it very difficult to change to other models. Many drivers have had the same hand controls, for example, for all their driving career, just moving them from one Mini to another.

The Mini was introduced in the '50s as the Austin 7. In 30 years the exterior has changed very little, but the suspension, larger wheels, recently improved soundproofing and interiors have all kept pace with modern trends. As a town car the Mini has few rivals but on the open road 40 mph feels like 70.

Resale prices have always been good and adapted cars can often find a market amongst the young first car buyer.

Joan Ross, of the North London Spastics Association, has been driving her automatic Mini for 4 years, and has used it on holidays to Scotland and Wales.

"It's a very good car for disabled people," she said. "Because it's so small it's easy to reverse and park, and a lot of disabled drivers have trouble doing that".

John Byworth

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## FILMS



Tommy Kjellqvist as Little Man in *The Sacrifice*.

## The Sacrifice

Andrei Tarkovskij, the Soviet film director hailed as a genius of the cinema, died of cancer in January while living in exile in Paris.

*The Sacrifice* was his last film. It is dedicated to his son who was finally allowed to join him during the last months of his life.

The film suggests he knew he was dying - it is full of his favourite images, which evoke his love and longing for his native country, and of Christ-like allusion. Long, dark and brooding, it was made, like most of his films, in Sweden.

The story is about Alexander, who is celebrating his birthday with his wife (wearing one of the most beautiful dresses I have ever seen), their young son who is mute, the doctor who is the wife's lover, and the postman who is a philosopher "touched by an evil angel" - epilepsy?

Nuclear war is declared the same day and Alexander vows that he will sacrifice the love of his son and his own power of

speech if things can be returned to the way they were before.

His wife, in true feminine style, takes personal responsibility for the global catastrophe, attributing it to her affair with the doctor. Luckily the doctor is on hand to give sedatives to the women while the men drink.

In the end life does return to the way it was - the wife is in ordinary clothes. But is it a dream? Has Alexander lost his sanity? Has he made the sacrifice? The last image is of the son regaining his power of speech: "In the beginning was the word... What does it mean, Poppa?"

The film lacks action. The peak of excitement comes when Alexander falls off his bike.

What saves it for me is the camera work: the beautiful images, so beautiful in fact that the subtitles (and the misspellings!) often got in the way.

What remains in my mind are the sparsely furnished rooms, dark Swedish furniture set against white-washed walls, flowing white, crocheted curtains against Swedish crystal - all interspersed with black-and-white footage of the nuclear winter.

*The Sacrifice* is a long film weighted down by monologues on the meaning of life. But it is Tarkovskij's final testament and that, in itself, makes the film worth seeing.

Debra Ziegler

*The Sacrifice is at the Lumiere cinema, St Martin's Lane, London.*

**DrRider Ltd**, featured in last month's protective clothing article, is based at The Yews, The Causeway, Mark, Highbridge, Somerset TA9 4QF.

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### OUTLOOK

## BOOKS

### How to Start a Dial-a-Ride

by Trevor Meadows  
(Erica, 8 Lloyd Square, London WC1X 9BA £5.50+40p p+p)

Clear. Concise. Well-written. Humorously illustrated. Comprehensive. Indispensable to anyone thinking of running a Dial-a-Ride, or involved in running one. Trevor Meadows's new book has all the professionalism one expects of the director of the National Advisory Unit for Community Transport.

Ten years ago, there were two Dial-a-Rides (DaRs) for mobility impaired people in Britain: tiny schemes using single Mini-Chairmen in Edinburgh and Welwyn/Hatfield. Today there are some 120, and the number grows monthly.

Many of these Dial-a-Rides are indebted to the NAU for advice. Yet they are still scratching at the surface of real need.

At least one person in ten in Britain is mobility handicapped and by some definitions it is one-in-four. I would guess that the present DaRs have no more than 500 vehicles between them, and make perhaps a total of 100,000 passenger trips a week. Yet if we



take the conservative estimate of 10 per cent of the population being mobility handicapped and assume each of those people want to make one Dial-a-Ride trip a week, we have a potential market of some 5 million journeys.

Clearly the DaR movement is still in its infancy. Most rural areas are still without them, and so are many large towns such as York, Brighton, Maidstone, Exeter, Cardiff, Peterborough, Durham and Crewe.

Existing Dial-a-Rides usually have flaws. For example, some have a restricted destination area because they do not cross borough boundaries - though one or two maverick schemes will take people anywhere in the UK; others lack reciprocal

arrangements or there are far too few vehicles and staff, or inflexible booking.

In short, DaRs are underfunded and sometimes lack clearly thought through objectives and management structures and systems.

This book is essential reading for all operators and funders. There is clearly an urgent need for more DaRs to be set up. This guide is essential to that process.

Nigel Smith

### Multiply Handicapped Children

by Rosalind Wyman  
(Human Horizon Series, Souvenir Press, hardback £8.95, paperback £6.95)

This book appealed to me from the first chapter. The warmth and understanding of the author is unusual, and I wanted to read on.

It starts with parents of handicapped children telling their stories and at once I felt akin to their feelings: those first few days when we become aware that we will never be the same again.

The book reveals the strain, not only on new parents but, in later years, on siblings. A very important point: the whole family is affected and involved.

Rosalind Wyman explains the work of the Ealing Family Centre, a unit run by SENSE, the National Deaf-Blind and Rubella Association, which aims to help parents develop their child's full potential. It was exciting to read what could be achieved if parents are guided and informed and there is early assessment.

The book gives practical advice from birth to around 8 years, with helpful pictures. Motor skills, communication, how to plan the day with learning, playing and the involvement of brothers and sisters, are all dealt with. So are how to cope with and, hopefully, solve behavioural difficulties and how to extend your child's other skills. A list of suitable toys is given and who manufactures them. All this is invaluable information; it can help parents avoid unnecessary trial and error and save money.

The style of the book is easy. Its size is pleasant to handle and the diagrams are helpful. I'm sure it will be referred to on many occasions. Professionals should also benefit from such an informative book.

The only real drawback is the title, which gives the impression that the book is dealing with all kinds of multiple handicap when it is geared to the multiple handicaps of blind-deaf children. Also, I read "multiply" as a verb the first time and advocating multiplication of handicapped children seems odd in the extreme!

Sandra Dalziel

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# What's On

## Courses at Castle Priory

**New Horizons in Language Teaching and Therapy** - an introduction to the range of linguistic ideas and techniques currently being developed, with an emphasis on methods of intervention and design of materials. Led by David Crystal. 12-16 April. Tuition £82, residence £88, non-residence £32.

**The Churches' Contribution to the Pastoral Needs of Adults with Disabilities** - a course for clergy and laity involved with people who have physical and intellectual disabilities. 29 April-1 May. Tuition £48, residence £44, non-residence £16.

**Modifying Behaviour and Planning Goals** - a workshop for nurses, care staff and therapists working with adults who have profound learning difficulties or behaviour problems. 5-7 May. Tuition £48, residence £44, non-residence £16.

For more information about any of these courses, write to Castle Priory College, Thames Street, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 0HE. Tel: (0491) 37551.

## Conferences and leisure

**The CRYPT Foundation** (the arts organisation for young people with disabilities) is holding its annual meeting on 11 March at the Westminster Conference Centre, London. Speakers include Margrethe de Neergaard from the Arts Council and Nabil Shaban from Fairplay. £3 full day, £1.50 afternoon only and £1 students or unwaged. Further information from CRYPT (AGM), Forum, Stirling Road, Chichester, W Sussex PO19 2EN. Tel: (0243) 786064.

**Disabled Persons Act 1986 - Benefit or Burden?** is a series of conferences organised by MIND and RADAR to look at the provisions of the new act. Dates and places are: Taunton 13 March, Ipswich 9 April, City University, London 16 April, Nottingham 24 April, Gateshead 7 May, Harrogate 21 May, Birmingham 4 June. £30 (with a limited number of free places for unwaged people). Further details from MIND, 22 Harley Street, London W1N 2ED. Tel: 01-637 0741.

**Learner Driver Course.** The Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus is running this course from 15-22 March at the Stackpole Trust in Pembroke. It's designed to let young disabled people gain experience of all aspects of driving before taking an assessment to see if they will make drivers. Further information from Ann Monaghan, ASBAH, 22 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0EP. Tel: 01-388 1382.

**Cerebral Palsy Sports.** The Spastics Society's events for 1987 include a national Bocca weekend in Birmingham on 21-22 March, the National Swimming Gala in Birmingham on 26 March and the National CP Under 19 Athletic Championships on 10 June. For further information on these and other events, contact Howard Bailey, Leisure Services Officer, The Spastics Society, Stephenson House, Brunel Centre, Bletchley, MK2 2EW. Tel: (0908) 643277.

**Have A Go Day.** The South West London branch of the British Sports Association for the Disabled is holding this event at the Westcroft Leisure Centre, Carshalton on Sunday 22 March. It will give people the opportunity to sample sports they may not have tried before. Further information from BSAD, 11 Byegrove Road, London SW19. Tel: 01-540 9238.

**A Study Day for Parents on Cerebral Palsy** is being held by the Medical Education and Information Unit of The Spastics Society on 23 March in the Tower Lecture Theatre at Guy's Hospital. Parents will be able to meet the medical profession and discuss some of the problems facing families with a handicapped child. Speakers include David Scrutton, Philippa Russell and Lillemor Jernqvist. £6. Contact Diana Patterson, MEIU, Newcomen Centre, Guy's Hospital, St Thomas Street, London SE1 9RT. Tel: 01-407 7600, ext 3632.

**Leaders Weekend at Bendrigg Lodge** activity centre, for those working with people with a physical disability, is from 27-29 March. Opportunities to try outdoor and indoor activities and discuss how these can develop disabled people's self-confidence and self-awareness. £40. Further details from Linda Neeson, Bursar, Bendrigg Lodge, Old Hutton, Kendal, Cumbria LA8 0NR. Tel: (0539) 23766.

**The Disabled Student Games** is being held at Loughborough University on 3-5 April. Further information and application forms from Scotland Sports Association for the Disabled, c/o Mr B Fenwick, 14 Gordon Court, Dalcalverhouse, Dundee. Tel: (0382) 23141, ext 232.

**The Second International Study Conference and Exhibition on Child Health** is taking place on 2-4 April at Edinburgh University and it will be of interest to all nursing disciplines concerned with child health. Subjects to be covered include genetic counselling, pre-conceptual care and children with special needs. Dr Maria Hari, director of the Androsch Peto Institute in Hungary and Andrew Sutton of Birmingham University will be speaking about conductive education. £34.50 for all 3 days (day and half-day tickets also available). Applications by 22 March. Further information from Lowri Robinson, Edsall Professionals Services, Cambridge House, 373-375 Euston Road, London NW1 3AR. Tel: 01-388 3171.

**Transition to Higher Education** is a course being held by the National Bureau for Handicapped Students at Reading University on 6-9 April. Designed for 6th form students with disabilities who intend to go on to higher education in the autumn, it aims to make the transition easier by providing information, advice and individual counselling. £7. Further information from Isabelle Redfern, NBHS, 336 Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA. Tel: 01-274 0565.

**Skills for Disabled Counsellors** is an introductory course, 13-15 April, at Avon Tyrell, a country house in the New Forest. £75. Details from Brigid Proctor, Counselling Section, South West London College, Wyvil Road Annexe, Wyvil Road, London SW8. Tel: 01-720 7553.

## Share Your Problems

With Margaret Morgan

### Make plans for a happy retirement

At Rosemary Dawson-Shepherd's memorial service in January, I saw many people who I helped to find jobs during the '50s. They laughingly reminded me that they were now coming up to retirement. So here are some suggestions on how to cope with the inevitable.

For those who like making advance arrangements, many organisations, books, pamphlets and people are available to advise you. Those who tend to let things happen may like to have a chat with someone who has recently retired.

Of course some readers, whether disabled or not, will not have been in paid employment or attending a workshop or day centre. If so, your life-style is unlikely to change a great deal, though you may have to adjust to having a retired partner at home all day.

Those of you who have been attending special centres, workshops or skills development centres may want to consider reducing your hours or changing over to another type of day provision as you get older. The age of retirement will probably be more flexible in these centres, so it would be sensible to talk over your future plans with your manager or supervisor.

Sheltered workshops, like Remploy, usually have fixed retirement ages, but it is often possible to retire earlier or to reduce your hours of work before you reach 60 or 65.

If you live in a residential centre or hostel it is unlikely that you will be asked to move when you reach your sixties. Again, it might be wise to talk plans over with your officer-in-charge or social worker, as you may want to take things more easily or have more privacy.

So, what should be considered in advance of retirement?

#### ● How much money will I have?

Each person's resources and needs will be different. The Citizens' Advice Bureau will help you to work out your pension and allowances and professional advisors are available in many organisations. A useful guide is *Approaching Retirement* from the publishers of *Which?*.

#### ● To stay put or to move on?

This is a crucial decision and many factors have to be considered. A new and comprehensive book has just been published, *Growing old together: elderly owner-occupiers and their housing* in which argument for "staying put" with appropriate house adaptations and support services is convincing. This book is a "must" for central and local planners, housing associations, building societies and all involved in social policy for elderly people.

Do make sure that you consider all aspects before deciding to move. A seaside town in mid-summer is a very different place in mid-winter!

#### ● What will I do all day?

The degree of concern about this depends on how you have spent your life up to retirement. For those whose job has been

at the centre of everything, the thought of leaving it all behind can be very frightening. Not only will you have no fixed routine, but your meeting place for friends and colleagues will disappear too.

Others are longing for retirement: to have time for all the things you really want to do. Sometimes, however, the reality is not quite as rosy as the day-dream and loneliness can be a real problem.

It is important to think through how you want to spend your time and a "personal audit" of your likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses, can be helpful. This is described in an easy-to-read and informative book *Countdown to Retirement*.

### Share your problems by phone

Lin Berwick, *Disability Now's* telephone counsellor, will write in *DN* next month about her first year's experience dealing with reader's problems.

For urgent personal and spiritual advice telephone Lin on (04024) 58325. She is on the end of the line on Monday from 1pm to 5pm and on Thursday from 6pm to 10pm.

*Choice*, the monthly magazine of the Pre-Retirement Association, also offers suggestions and ideas.

Do go to a pre-retirement course if you can. If your employer or workshop hasn't yet organised a course, suggest that they get in touch with the Pre-Retirement Association, who will advise them.

#### ● Companionship and social contacts

The change of environment from work-place to home can be difficult. Some people are happy



Simon Crompton

to spend time on their own or with a partner. Others prefer to be in a crowd.

It takes effort and initiative to make new relationships as one gets older, but there are many opportunities - adult education classes, voluntary organisations, social centres, churches, sporting activities, pubs and clubs.

If you have disabilities which make getting around difficult, you may find transport and assistance are more readily available as you get older. Many other elderly people develop mobility problems and special facilities are often provided.

Look out for concessions on buses and trains, for concerts, plays and cinemas and at some tourist attractions and stately homes. Well-known organisations like Age Concern have local branches and your public library is a real resource - just scan the notice-boards.

Don't be afraid of looking into the future beyond retirement. Talk to people who have recently retired and get some expert advice.


*The Pre-Retirement Association, 19 Undine Street, London SW17 8PP, Tel: 01-767 3225*

*Age Concern, Bernard Sunley House, Pitcairn Road, Mitcham, Surrey, Tel: 01-640 5431*

*Growing old together: elderly owner-occupiers and their housing 1987, by Hedley Taylor, published by the Centre for Policy on Ageing, 25-31 Ironmonger Row, London EC1V 3QP, Tel: 01-153 1787*


*Approaching Retirement, 1983, published by The Consumers' Association*

*Countdown to Retirement, 1978, by Harry Miller, published by Hutchinson Benham*


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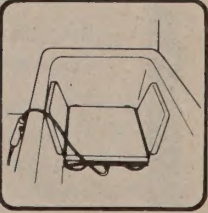


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Lifts from  
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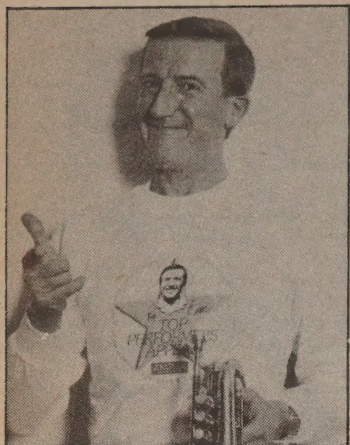
I WOULD LIKE A FREE BROCHURE ☐ A FREE DEMONSTRATION ☐

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Accessories including the Mangar trolley from  
**Mangar Aids Ltd.**, Presteigne Industrial Estate, Powys, Wales.  
Tel: 0544 267674 Sales Dept.





**Roy Castle**, presenter of the BBC series *Record Breakers*, is inviting young people to break a record for charity.

The *Top Performers Appeal*, launched by the Stars Organisation for Spastics, Mencap, Muscular Dystrophy and Leukemia Research with Anglia Building Society, aims to raise £1/2m from sponsored record-breaking attempts.

Donations and inquiries can be sent to The Roy Castle Top Performers Appeal, Wakes Hall, Wakes Colne, Colchester, Essex.

## Fiat helps children's cancer fund

Fiat Auto (UK) and the Fiat dealer network in Britain hope to raise over £70,000 for the Malcolm Sargent Cancer Fund for Children in the next year.

The fund helps children with cancer, leukemia or Hodgkin's disease.

Under the first deal of its kind in Britain, for every Fiat sold between 1 February 1987 and

31 January 1988 Fiat Auto (UK) will donate 50p matched by 50p from the dealer.

Peter Quaglia, managing director of Fiat (UK), said: "Although it is ourselves and the dealers who will be donating the money, it is really the people buying our vehicles who will be contributing to this worthwhile charity."

Simon Crompton



**Money for old soap.** The Blakesley Soap Box Grand Prix, raised £6,262 for The Spastics Society last year. Andrew Ross, director of marketing (second left) received the cheque last month from Peter Mimms of sponsors Norman Frizzell Motor & General (third left), Tony Richardson, of co-sponsors Civil Servants Motoring Association (left), and Blakesley organiser Tony Hackett (right).

## PEOPLE

The new director of the Association of Community Health Councils for England and Wales is 33-year-old **Toby Harris**. He wants to make sure that under-resourced Community Health Councils around the country get the funding they need to continue their work effectively.

After being an economist at the Bank of England, he spent 8 years at the Electricity Council, where he became deputy director. "There are lots of parallels between the two jobs," he says. "Before I represented consumer interests in a public sector area, and I'm doing pretty much the same here."

"I am particularly concerned that there should be a national consumer voice for patients using the National Health Service."

The first board game to be produced from the start in two versions - one for sighted people and one for blind and/or sighted people - was a huge success at its launch at the British Toy Fair

last month.

**Brian Sibley**, who invented the game *First and Ten* based on American football, has been blind since he was nine. He started to invent games after being unemployed for three years and was urged to take his hobby up commercially by the Royal National Institute for the Blind's small business adviser, Beryl Morton.

His big breakthrough came when one of the companies he approached asked him to invent a game on American football.

He had the game ready in just three months and was offered £1000 for it, but realising he was on to a winner, he turned it down. He then approached Paradigm Games who were so impressed with *First and Ten* they offered him a contract immediately.

The game goes on general release in the summer and will be available in toy departments all over the country. An American launch is also planned.

# Integration. Participation. Anti-Discrimination

These are the policy themes of the London Boroughs Disability Resource Team and the eleven boroughs it serves - Brent, Camden, Ealing, Greenwich, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham, Newham and Southwark.

Our Team, currently comprising 23 people, provides a variety of services to Borough Members and officers. We help our boroughs implement policies and promote practical methods of combating discrimination against disabled people and ensuring their full participation and integration in community life. We arrange training courses on disability awareness, employment practices, communication and other topics. We provide taping and braille services and sign language interpretation. We publish materials about disability and maintain a library of written, audio and video taped materials.

Naturally, our effectiveness in all these areas relies on the participation of people with a wide range of skills, who can work successfully together towards common objectives. The three Units within the Team deal with Borough Liaison, Research and Information and Administration.

For these positions, four in the Borough Liaison Unit and one in the Administration Unit, we require good communicators, skilful organisers, people committed to ensuring that disabled people are fully involved in community life.

## Head of Borough Liaison Unit

(£13,245 - £15,420)

This key position calls for considerable organisational and management skills and an ability to work effectively with a wide variety of people and groups. You will lead the work of this Unit of eight people and, through the management group, help to direct the work of the whole Team.

It is important that you have an extensive knowledge of legislation and services relating to people with disabilities, and of the structures and procedures of local government, as you will be responsible for co-ordinating a full range of advice and assistance to Boroughs in areas such as employment, access, housing, planning, social services and leisure.

This Unit has a particular responsibility for issues relating to disabled members of Afro-Caribbean, Asian and other racial minorities, so an awareness of matters affecting these sections of the community is also crucial. You should have direct experience of disability and experience working with voluntary organisations or borough councils.

Please quote Ref: DRT/1/

## Black Community Outreach Worker

(£11,964 - £13,692 inc.)

The Team's commitment to achieving the fullest possible integration for all disabled people requires an Outreach Worker to take specific responsibility for working with disabled members of Afro-Caribbean, Asian and other racial minorities.

You will be working as a member of the Borough Liaison Unit to help Boroughs develop their work on race equality and disability. This will require good communication skills, a knowledge of disability issues, and a highly organised approach to work.

As this is a new position within the Team, we would also expect you to be able to demonstrate a highly imaginative approach to this work and an ability to respond flexibly to changing demands. You should have direct experience working in Afro-Caribbean, Asian and other racial minority communities.

Please quote Ref: DRT/2/

## Borough Liaison Officer

(£11,964 - £13,692 inc.)

As a vital member of the Borough Liaison Unit, you will undertake a wide range of duties aimed at keeping Borough Officers aware of the needs and wishes of disabled people, and of the implications for them of existing or planned policies and activities.

This will naturally require a thorough knowledge of the discrimination faced by people with both hidden and visible disabilities, and particularly by people from ethnic minorities. You should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the roles of both local government and voluntary bodies in making provision for disabled people, and of the legislation and services relating to them. You should also be able to demonstrate an ability to produce clear and concise written reports and other materials for wide circulation.

You must be able to work effectively as part of a team and to co-operate effectively with members of a wide variety of bodies.

Please quote Ref: DRT/3/

## Communication Officer

(£11,964 - £13,692 inc.)

As a member of the Borough Liaison Unit, you will have special responsibility for helping boroughs give equal access to information and services to people with disabilities who experience communication difficulties. You will advise borough officers on the needs of deaf and hard of hearing people, on speech facilitation and on communication aids.

You will co-ordinate the Team's sign language interpreter booking service and develop proposals for a telephone exchange/communication centre. This work obviously requires a well organised person who has good communication skills and can work effectively as part of a team.

You must have a good knowledge of the deaf community in Britain and of the experiences of a wide range of people with disabilities. You should be fluent in the use of British Sign Language and able to communicate in English.

Please quote Ref: DRT/4/

## Administrative Trainee

(£7,275 - £11,559 inc.)

This new position has been created to give people with disabilities from Afro-Caribbean, Asian or other racial minorities an opportunity to get administrative and management training in local government. As part of the Administration Unit you will provide support to all units in the Team.

As part of your training you will learn about the financial and work programme monitoring systems used in the Team. You will work with others to organise meetings and conferences. You'll have opportunities to work with the Information Officers and Enquiry Officer. Training and day release courses will be open to you.

You may not have many formal qualifications, but you should be able to communicate effectively, work well with others, and have an interest in developing your administrative and management skills for work in a local authority.

Please quote Ref: DRT/5/

**L**ONDON  
**B**OROUGH  
**D**ISABILITY  
**R**ESOURCE  
**T**EAM

For application forms and further details contact Jean Epps, LBDRT, Room 92/95, The County Hall, London SE1 7PB or by first dialling the RNID telephone exchange, Tel: 01-387 1475/2105 and asking to be connected to 261 0194. Closing date for applications is April 6th 1987.

We are intending to hold three afternoon or early evening sessions during which people who need more information about the application and selection process may visit the Team. More information about these sessions will be enclosed with the application form.

Applicants are considered on the basis of their suitability for the post with equal opportunities for women, black/ethnic minorities, lesbians and gay men and people with disabilities and regardless of marital status, age, creed/religion and unrelated criminal conviction. All posts are open for job-sharing.



# CLASSIFIED

## For Sale

**BIG ELECTRIC SCOOTER** with batteries, charger and shopping tray. Never used. £650 new, asking £500 o.n.o. Mrs Beattie. Tel: 01-444 8605.

**TALBOT RANCHO**, Feb '82, X reg. MOT Nov '87. 28,500 miles. Will carry passenger in wheelchair (access by ramp), plus driver and 3 other people. £2,500. Tel: Rawdon (0532) 506326.

**VESSA ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIR (1983)**. Good condition - overhauled and 2 new batteries installed (Jan '87). Kerb climber. £500 ono. Tel: Evesham (0386) 40896.

**EVEREST & JENNINGS ELECTRIC CHAIR** with Dudley chin control. 6 yrs old. £150 ono. Tel: Hitchin (0462) 52458.

**BATRICAR 1982**, with hood and accessories. Little used. £750. Tel: Leatherhead (0372) 372629.

**FORD CORTINA MK5 1600cc**. Disabled special, extra wide 2 door, Y reg automatic. 30,000 miles. £2,000 ono. Mr Jeffery. Tel: (0268) 557430.

**ELECTRICALLY OPERATED ADJUSTABLE SINGLE BED**. Lying to sitting position. Price few months ago £1,200 & VAT. Moving to smaller house so surplus to requirements. Bargain. £825 inc. Tel: (0203) 464917.

**RANGE RIDER 3-WHEELED PETROL-DRIVEN TRIKE**. Under 2 years old, low mileage. Standard model. Will accept £250. Andrew Cooper. Tel: Bristol (0272) 298422.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Dulux Community Projects 1987**. Dulux, the paint manufacturer, is offering free paint (worth £50,000 in all) for voluntary groups who would like to carry out painting projects for the benefit of the community. For information and an application form, write to Dulux Community Projects Officer, 2 Endell Street, London WC2H 9EW. Closing date for receipt of application forms is 16 May.

**Greater London Arts Film/Video Production Grants 1987/88**. Applications are now invited from independent film/video makers who want to complete a production. Grants between £200 and £7,000 will be provided for materials. Applicants must live or work in Greater London. Closing date for applications is 31 March. For further details and an application form send an A4 SAE to Juliet McKoen, Production Fund Administrator (Film & Video), GLA, 9 White Lion Street, London N1 9PD. Tel: 01-837 8808.

**The Disabled Traveller's International Phrasebook** contains some 200 specialised words and over 50 phrases useful to people with disabilities abroad. Languages include French, German, Spanish and Dutch. £1.50, including postage, from Disability Press, Applemarket House, 17 Union Street, Kingston-upon-Thames.

**The Catalogue of Library Holdings** is a 700 page handbook listing 5,000 books and other material suitable for children with a handicap affecting their reading ability. £7.50 (including postage) from the National Library for the Handicapped Child, Lynton House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9LT. Tel: 01-387 7016.

**SANE Charity Shop**. The first shop to support the work of a new charity raising funds for research into schizophrenia and services to help people with the condition has now opened at 58-60 High Road, Ilford, Essex. To find out more about the work of SANE (Schizophrenia - A National Emergency) write to SANE, 120 Regent Street, London W1A. Tel: 01-434 0150.

**LARK 4300 ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIR**. Shopping basket. Only used twice. £1,050 o.n.o. (£447 saving). Tel: 01-450 6999.

**STANNAH STAIRLIFT**. Straight staircase. 13 stairs. Unused. New in July '86. Also lap diagonal harness. Complete £1,200 ono. Tel: Coventry (0203) 591728.

**MEYRA POWER CHAIR**, R or L hand control. Kerb climber, 2 new batteries, 4 years old, recently overhauled. Cost £2,850, asking £700. Mr Reeves. Tel: 01-570 9902 (after 6 pm).

**EVEREST & JENNINGS RUNAROUND**. Excellent condition. 9 months old. £800. Tel: (0371) 850266.

**ROLLS 500 SPORTS WHEELCHAIR** with brakes and anti-tippers. Hardly used. £400 ono. Tel: Ashington (0670) 818181.

## Wanted

A "RUNAROUND" **MOBILITY VEHICLE**, battery powered which climbs kerbs, hills etc and dismantles easily. In good condition please. Tel: (0203) 464917.

## Accommodation

**ROMFORD YMCA** has a room suitable for a disabled person, to live in on a permanent or semi-permanent basis. Charges depend on age and status. For more information contact Pip Wilson, Romford YMCA, Rush Green Road, Romford RM7 0PH. Tel: (0708) 66211.

## Holidays

**VARCOE HOUSE HOLIDAY FLATS**. Two well equipped self-catering flats, each to sleep up to 6 people, especially adapted for disabled people. Level access to flats and nearby sandy beach. Ample parking. Seasonal price range to cover maintenance only £45-£60 per week. Details from booking manager, Mrs L E Elliott, 3 Bosvean Gardens, Illogan, Nr Redruth, Cornwall. Tel: (2090) 218650.

**BROAD HAVEN CARAVAN PARK**. Sand and green hills cradle this award winning caravan park which has an especially adapted holiday caravan for a wheelchair user and their family. Only a 350 yard flat walk to the sea front and sandy beach. Write for a brochure to Broad Haven Caravan Park, Broad Haven, Haverford-

west, Pembrokeshire, SA62 3JD or telephone 0437 83277.

## Services

**SPECIAL CARE AGENCY** finds nannies-mothers' helps for handicapped children (like mine), or care assistants for adults, everywhere. Ring Linda Layton (0491) 671842.

## Find-A-Friend

**DISABLED MAN**, 33, would like to write to and befriend an able-bodied lady, 25-33 years. Please write to Box No 142, *Disability Now*, address on page 16 (marking envelopes Private & Confidential).

**LIKE A PENFRIEND?** Anybody who has MS or a similar disability is welcome to write, giving their age, hobbies, sex, marital status, to Isabel Prime, Penfriend Organiser, The MS Society, 25 Effie Road, Fulham, London SW6 1EE. She will send names and addresses of people you might like to write to. (Please enclose a SAE).

**YOUNG MAN (26)**, with CP seeks penfriend. Interests include pop music, swimming, photography and PHAB. All letters answered. Write to Dave Clarkson, Thorngrove House, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4RE.

**RETIRED WOMAN**, 66, quiet, cheerful, would like to visit or write to disabled man age 62-70 in the southern area. Please write to Box No 141, *Disability Now*, address on page 16 (marking envelopes Private & Confidential).

**LIVELY FEMALE ESCORT REQUIRED**, 22 April-1 May inclusive, to provide assistance for young lady (lightweight!) who uses wheelchair. Cost of hotel (all accessible) and travel from Heathrow to Jersey and return will be met by client. Companion must be prepared to enjoy a few late nights and provide personal care and good company. Replies to "Escort", 11 Lingfield Avenue, Kingston-Upon-Thames, Surrey KT1 2TL.

**DISABLED GENTLEMAN**, active, homeloving, 28, would like to correspond with similar lady. Please write to Box No 143, *Disability Now*, address on page 16 (marking envelopes Private & Confidential).

**CLASSIFIED RATES: £1.50 per line**, with a minimum charge of £6. Advertisers are invoiced after the advertisement appears. *Find-a-Friend* column is free. (All ads are free for members of The Spastics Society or an affiliated group).

## LEWISHAM AND NORTH SOUTHWARK HEALTH AUTHORITY COMMUNITY SERVICES SECRETARY

(Higher Clerical Grade) for Primary Care Resource Scheme

This innovative new scheme provides a real alternative to acute hospital admission to those who prefer to be cared for at home.

We require a Secretary to work at the Surrey Docks Health Centre to provide secretarial and administrative support to the scheme. You need good typing and office skills, a flexible approach to work and the ability to communicate sensitively and effectively with both professionals and the public.

The Health Centre is constructed all on one level, and therefore this post would be suitable for a person with a disability.

Salary: £6,551 to £7,689 per annum (inclusive) for a 36 hour week.

For further information please ring Mrs C. Carter, Co-ordinator, Primary Care Resource Scheme, Surrey Docks Health Centre on 01-231 3085.

For application papers contact the Personnel Department, Lewisham Hospital, High Street, London SE13 6LH. Telephone 01-690 7255. Closing date: Tuesday 24 March 1987.

## LEISURE & RECREATION SPORTS WORKER Sc. 3 £8,496 - £9,089 inc

You will be working with a well motivated team that consists of ten Sports Workers with each one having their own target group responsibility and sport speciality to develop.

We are looking for someone with experience in developing sport for the disabled. This post will involve creating an active programme of coaching sessions and training courses throughout the Borough that covers all aspects of sport for the disabled.

Ref: RPRDA 25.

Application forms and further details are available from London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (Personnel), Town Hall Extension, King Street, Hammersmith, W6 9JU, telephone 01-741 0904 (24 hour answering service) quoting appropriate reference number.  
Closing date: 27th March 1987

You are welcome to apply whatever your gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or practices, age (up to 65 years), disability or trade union activities.  
Job sharers welcome.

**Hammersmith & Fulham** *Serving our Community*

## London Borough of Camden

### ARCHITECTURE AND SURVEYING DEPARTMENT

### Co-ordinator of Access for People with Disabilities £13,347 - £15,048 pa (incl) plus car allowance

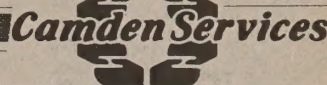
Camden is committed to undertaking a substantial programme to ensure, wherever possible that people with disabilities are able to have unaccompanied access to all Council buildings, workplaces and leisure facilities.

To achieve this aim, we now seek someone to work within the Department of Architecture & Surveying but liaise with all Council Departments. Your role will involve in preparing programmes of work; advising and encouraging planning applicants to take opportunities to create access; and liaising with the Council's Disabilities Resource Unit in the co-ordination and promotion of a comprehensive access policy.

You must have a direct life experience to understand the special needs and requirements of people with disabilities, particularly in obtaining access to, egress from and mobility within, buildings, offices, leisure facilities, etc. It is also essential that you have the ability to analyse prospective projects, programme and monitor, write clear and concise reports, and work on your own initiative. Good communication and persuasive skills are necessary to set up formal informal consultative process within the Borough. Whilst the ability to understand technical and design criteria is not essential, you must be able to explain the problems experienced by people with disabilities to technically qualified and/or experienced colleagues.

As an equal opportunities employer, Camden is committed to increasing employment opportunities for women, black people, and other under represented groups. People with physical disabilities are positively welcome to apply for this post. The post is particularly suitable for a wheelchair user.

Application form (and further details) from and to be returned to:  
Director of Architecture and Surveying, Old Town Hall, High Holborn, WC1V 7BG or telephone 01-405 3411 ext 125 quoting ref no. 5/206/D.  
Closing date 16th March



### equal opportunity employer

Applicants are considered on the basis of their suitability for the post, with equal opportunities for women, black/ethnic minorities, lesbians and gay men and people with disabilities, and regardless of marital status, age, creed/religion and unrelated criminal conviction. All posts are open for job-sharing.

### LEEDS CITY COUNCIL DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHEME - PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TRAINING CO-ORDINATOR S.O.2. £11,604-£12,297

Leeds City Council's Equal Opportunities Unit is promoting a unique vocational training scheme for people with disabilities.

Following training in the use of the Council's micro-computers, modern office practice and life and social skills, course members will be placed within Council Departments.

We are looking for an enthusiastic person committed to the improvement of training/employment opportunities for people with disabilities, to co-ordinate, manage and develop the scheme.

Experience in training and an understanding of the needs of people with disabilities are essential requirements of the post.

Send stamped addressed envelope for application form and job description to the Personnel Officer, Department of Administration, Selectapost 2, Civic Hall, Leeds LS1 1UR.

Closing date: 16th March, 1987.

"Leeds is an equal opportunities employer"

Post suitable for job sharing



## SHROPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL Social Services Department

To develop and promote services to handicapped people, we urgently need:

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

£7,311 - £10,164 (Scale 4-5)

(Progression to Scale 6 according to experience and appraisal)

We have reviewed our occupational therapy service and can now offer a career grade structure with the possibility of early progression. Already we are planning to meet the requirements of the new Disabled Persons Act, 1986, and believe that the future holds exciting new prospects for qualified occupational therapists in Shropshire. Excellent working relationships exist with good support and supervision.

Informal discussion welcome: please contact Madelaine Butler - Shrewsbury (0743) 253852.

Application forms from: The Director of Social Services, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury: telephone 0743-253712.

Closing date: 24.3.87.



## Government response to Disabled Persons Act was complacent, says Committee

The Government has been complacent about implementing part of the new Disabled Persons Act which obliges long-stay hospitals to give advance notice of discharging patients, according to the all-party Commons Social Services Committee.

The same Committee, chaired by Renee Short, MP, recommended advance notification in its 1985 report on community care, which drew a reassuring response from the Government: "... all this has both been recognised and implemented as good practice," said its official reply.

But the Committee's latest report, on primary health care, says: "That response was, we believe, too complacent. We urge the Government to give high priority to the implementation of Section 7 of the Disabled Persons (Services and Consultation) Act 1986."

Neighbourhood nursing services should plan community services for people before they are discharged from hospital, says the report. Community psychiatric nurses and community mental handicap nurses should form part of the basic primary health care.

The Committee also sees a

role for the voluntary sector in primary health care. A closer working relationship between social workers, voluntary workers, nurses, midwives, health visitors and GPs could result in better planning for people with disabilities.

Experimental community care schemes could be started, it says, housing health services, social services and social security under one roof. It welcomes the Government's decision to carry out a major review of community care headed by Sir Roy Griffiths, and recommends that it considers ways to improve delivery of primary health services by better financial management between the different agencies.

The report calls for a new pay system for GPs, with group practice allowances so that they can employ more staff to improve patient care. There should be more cash available for GPs who provide health screening for the elderly and specialist services.

Many of the proposals in the Government's green paper on primary health care are welcomed, but plans to create health care shops, involving doctors, dentists, opticians and chemists, are rejected.



*The Queen Mother celebrated her 50th anniversary as Patron of the Royal National Institute for the Blind with a visit to RNIB headquarters in London last month. During the visit she met children from the RNIB Sunshine House School in Northwood (above) and was presented with a commemorative album illustrating the RNIB's work over the last 50 years.*

## More conductive education teachers for Britain

The Spastics Society has welcomed the formation of the Foundation for Conductive Education and its new agreement with the Hungarian Peto Institute to co-operate in an experimental programme of training British teachers to become "conductors" on the Hungarian model.

Nine or ten teachers will undergo a four-year training in Hungary and Britain, starting on 1 September. Initially 10 children with cerebral palsy will be involved in the teaching programme.

"The Spastics Society welcomes both the formation of the Foundation and the agreement to train conductors in Hungary and the UK", says John Cox, director. "Any advance in the field of conductive education must be applauded."

The principle of conductive education was pioneered in this country by The Spastics Society, which opened its first unit practising a UK-style of CE in 1966. Since then it has been practising a multi-disciplinary approach in keeping with the educational framework in Britain.

In 1977 Dr Maria Hari, director of the Peto Institute, visited

Ingfield Manor School.

The Spastics Society has also won praise for its work with children who have profound physical and mental disabilities.

Dr Hari will be returning to Britain in April. She is due to speak at the International Study Conference on Child Health in Edinburgh (2-4 April) and at the RACE (Rapid Action for Conductive Education) Conductive Education Conference in Coventry (4 April).

## Job to count on

Disabled people and other minorities are being encouraged to become accountants.

The Chartered Association of Certified Accountants has designated 1987 "Accounting for Equality" year.

The campaign is aimed at those in or about to enter the job market, and employers. The flexibility of the certified accountancy qualification is stressed.

## LRT pledge to fill the Careline gap

Valentine's Day saw the final run of the ill-fated Careline bus. But London Regional Transport is to fill the gap. It will install wheelchair lifts on all Airbuses and run an accessible link service between London's main railway stations.

Until the Airbuses are converted, LRT is providing an hourly accessible minibus service between Victoria and Heathrow. More minibuses will connect Paddington, Euston, King's Cross and Waterloo with the Heathrow-Victoria shuttle.

Careline, a wheelchair accessible bus which ran on a circular route to London's main stations and Heathrow, had been losing thousands of pounds a week since it began last July. The buses could carry 21 seated passengers and 8 in wheelchairs, but averaged only 4 passengers per trip.

In December Alder Valley North, which ran Careline, threatened to end it unless major transport organisations, including LRT, came up with funds. Instead LRT decided to provide its own service.

The first Airbuses will be ready to carry wheelchair passengers in May, and by July all 24 should be converted.

Permanent arrangements to link the mainline stations have not been completed yet. "We would aim to have a vehicle that is not only large enough to carry people with disabilities and their families, but some able-bodied people too," said Tony Shaw, of LRT's Unit for Disabled Passengers.

"I am pleased to see that LRT have made a commitment to do something," said Richard Whitbread, managing director of Alder Valley North. "We have proved that there is a market which must be catered for."

For timetable information on the LRT Careline minibus service ring 01-222 1234.

## DHSS announces new wheelchairs

The DHSS wheelchair service will supply 3 new types of wheelchair, including a sports chair, and will become responsible for the provision of wheelchair seating for people with disabilities.

John Major, the Minister for Social Security and the Disabled, announced the changes in Parliament on 17 February, as part of the Government's response to the McColl report on Artificial Limb and Appliance Services. He said his main announcement would be made "very shortly".

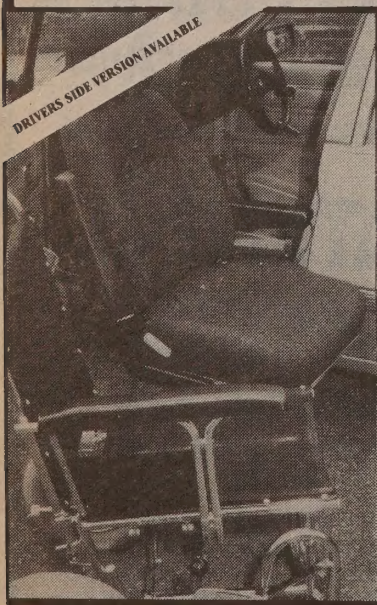
A low cost, light and manoeuvrable pushchair will become available for occasional users. Two models are on trial.

Work has also commenced on a chair specifically for children, with adaptability, support, portability and appearance in mind. Mr Major assured the House that "we will push it speedily".

Mr Major also said there would be a further improvement in the efficiency and supply of wheelchairs generally and that the funds released by this should go on the development and supply of a chair to enable young and active disabled people to participate in sporting events.

All these developments were recommended in Professor McColl's report, which was highly critical of ALAC Services.

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Assistant Editor Simon

Crompton

Reporter Karen Wingate

Editorial Secretary Kathy

Johnson

Circulation Gayle Mooney

Advertising Jonathan

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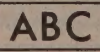
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